

MARIN AGRICULTURE AND EDUCATION ALLIANCE
FEASIBILITY STUDY
FOR THE
MARIN EDUCATION FARM AND GARDEN PROJECT
August 2006



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The *Marin Agriculture and Education Alliance* (MAEA) thanks
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Buck Institute for Education
for the commission this study.

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Marin Education Farm and Garden Project

Feasibility Study
August, 2006

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Introduction to the Farm and Garden Feasibility Study

“When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world.” John Muir

Marin has a legacy as a vital agricultural region providing a diverse number of products and services from the farms to a community that values and actively supports its regional agriculture. The farming industry will continue to thrive in this beautiful region as long as it continues to be supported by the regional community through education, the marketplace and local policies.

The Marin Agriculture and Education Alliance (MAEA) is a coalition of environmental, educational and agricultural organizations in Marin County. One of the goals of MAEA is to further the understanding of local agriculture and its relationship to the environment, the community and individual health. To this end, a feasibility study was commissioned by the *Marin County Board of Supervisors*, the *Marin Community Foundation*, and the *Buck Institute for Education* to determine the feasibility of creating an education farm and garden facility in the city-centered corridor of Marin. The study would also review programs that are currently in place and determine what programmatic gaps exist.

A. Marin’s Countywide Plan Vision

The guiding principles of the Marin Countywide Plan (CWP) state that:

“Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the future is the overarching theme of the countywide plan. The Marin County government is committed to lead by example, support public participation, and work in community partnerships.”

There are 10 guiding principles listed in the countywide plan, 7 of which are specifically addressed in the study for the Farm and Garden Project. These principles include:

1. Link equity, economy and the environment locally, regionally and globally
2. Use finite and renewable resources efficiently and effectively
3. Steward our natural and agricultural assets
4. Foster businesses that provide a balance of economic, environmental and social benefits
5. Educate and prepare our workforce and residents
6. Cultivate ethnic, cultural and socio-economic diversity
7. Support public health, safety and social justice

B. Marin Agriculture and Education Alliance Vision

Marin's farming, education and environmental communities saw the need to create better alignment and connection between the region's environmental, educational and agricultural agencies and in 1998 the Marin Agriculture and Education Alliance (MAEA) was formed. The organizations included:

Marin Agricultural Land Trust, Marin Organic, Marin County Farm Bureau, Marin County Office of Education, Marin Food Systems Project, Slide Ranch, Marin School Garden Collaborative, Bay Institute, University of California Cooperative Extension, Marin Conservation Corps, Marin County Farmers Market, Environmental Education Council of Marin, College of Marin, Permaculture Institute of Northern California.

In 2002 MAEA member organizations and community representatives came together and created a vision for agriculture and education in Marin County.

The goals of that vision:

For all Marin constituents, an awareness and understanding of:

1. The benefits of buying locally grown, organic food.
2. Where locally grown organic food can be purchased.
3. The contribution that the agricultural industry brings to the preservation of open space and beauty of Marin.

MAEA realized that in order to bring this vision forward, they needed to bridge the gap in education and awareness. The strategies that they agreed upon were to:

1. Educate Marin school children about agriculture in schools and on farms.
2. Support and encourage the purchase of local foods in schools, institutions and retail stores.
3. Build public awareness and understanding of the importance of supporting local agriculture by increasing media coverage and public agency understanding.
4. Support viability of agriculture in Marin with pro-active public policy and planning.
5. Provide interested ranchers and farmers with tools for sustaining and enhancing their operations.

C. Commissioning the Feasibility Study

One of the steps in putting this vision into action was to undertake a feasibility study to see where existing agricultural and environmental education programs are in place and where future opportunities to improve education and awareness could take place. To this end, a feasibility study was commissioned in April 2004 and funded by the *Marin Board of Supervisors*, *Marin Community Foundation* and the *Buck Institute for Education*.

This report was conducted by a project team of local contractors that included Patti Vance, Avis Licht, Sandy Neumann and Ellen Hopkins. Patti Vance, acting as project manager, coordinated the efforts of the project team to work closely with the steering and advisory committees. In the past eighteen months, regular meetings and discussions with the steering committee and advisory board have created a strong working relationship within the educational, environmental and farming communities in Marin.

D. Feasibility Study Goals

The intent of the study was to explore ways to promote the following goals as developed by the Advisory Committee that included more than 100 participants:

To lay the foundation for this study, the steering committee drafted a framework through which information could be gathered to include a broad spectrum of representation from the community. The methods used for this process included:

- 1) Surveys
- 2) Focus groups
- 3) Interviews
- 4) A study of model education programs in the Bay Area and beyond.

The study would research and provide options for a program and a site that would offer:

1. Classes, workshops and activities that will educate the public about organic farming, nutrition and the environment.
2. Integration of organically grown food into school lunch programs and public institutions.
3. Demonstration gardens that will teach plant diversity and how to grow food.
4. A demonstration green building with alternative energy and other sustainable practices.
5. Meaningful internships and job training opportunities for young adults.

Study recommendations would provide:

2. Several options for educational programs
3. Research on possible sites
4. Information on financial needs and governance structures that could make the project workable.
5. A business plan that would generate revenue to support the project.

E. Recommendations

A significant finding of the feasibility study this past year has been the need for existing Marin organizations to work together in a coordinated effort to improve the health of the community through sustainable practices. By working together, a duplication of services is minimized and resource sharing benefits everyone.

The study was commissioned at a time when a number of organizations were formulating long-range plans. After a year-long study to determine the feasibility for an farm and garden for Marin, the report concludes that a stand-alone project of substantial size (5 to 10 acres) including building structures was not viable at this time. Unavailable land in the city-centered corridor and potential costs were the primary obstacles (see Financials and, Recommendations – Programs & Sites). As alternatives, the study submits three recommendations:

Recommendation 1 – Regional Network of Sites; Coordination of Services

Need A: Accessible programs within communities is a priority for schools and residents.

Need B: A central location and coordination of services and resources will benefit all organizations.

Foster a partnership with the *Marin Center for Sustainable Agriculture* (Marin Farmers Market) to develop an adjunct organic garden in central Marin. This would serve as a hands-on demonstration site of approximately one to three acres that would promote healthy food and an appreciation of Marin agriculture for families and residents of all ages. It would also serve as an anchor location for agencies providing similar educational services to share resources as part of a regional network. Such a network would ensure that services build upon and reinforce practices rather than duplicate efforts. Through a network coordinator, regional planning would address the gaps identified in the feasibility study.

Recommendation 2 - Mobile Agricultural Education Unit

Need A: Underserved elementary schools and middle/high school students have few opportunities to benefit from Ag/Environment programs due to daily schedule constraints.

Explore the development of a mobile interactive education unit (similar in scope to a ‘bookmobile’) to promote local food systems, healthy eating and wellness, and sustainable agriculture for community events and schools not served through existing resources. Continue to monitor the development of a prototype mobile unit that is being developed in the East Bay by SAGE (Sustainable Agriculture Education). The projected annual cost of operating a mobile unit is approximately \$100,000. A cost effective alternative would be a traveling mobile team that would deliver services to schools, particularly the middle and high schools.

Recommendation 3 - Encourage MAEA Organizations and the College of Marin to Join Efforts to Further Promote the College’s Proposal for the Center for Sustainability and Health.

Need A. Students preparing for post-secondary education and career exploration would benefit from a greater exposure to environmental science and internship opportunities.

Need B. Emphasize green and efficient energy systems in Marin. Establish a center where people can draw knowledge and learn skills that model sustainable living.

Promote partnerships between MAEA organizations and the College of Marin to develop a production/education garden at the Indian Valley campus as part of the college’s proposed *Center for Sustainability and Health*. Coordinate efforts among interested organizations that include the Marin Conservation Corps, the UC Cooperative Extension, Marin Municipal Water District and the Marin Agriculture Commission.



Marin Conservation Corps

Findings

Important Issues for Stakeholders

For nearly every group that responded to the surveys, two themes were identified as the most important concepts for the project. They were, 1) environmental curriculum and, 2) a program that emphasizes green practices and energy systems. Two additional themes were also deemed important for the project as listed below:

1. Program that offers environmental curriculum
2. Program that emphasizes green practices and green energy systems
3. Program with academic connections to food
4. Curriculum with links to farms and agriculture

Each survey group also identified themes that were of significant importance to their specific organization.

Organization	Table 1	Priority Themes
UC Master Gardeners		Multi-generational community activities
Marin Conservation Corps		Internships, job training opportunities
Marin Farmers and Agriculture Community		Summer program for students
Pickleweed Advisory Board		Healthy organic food available in canal area
Marin County Teachers		Activities to complement existing school gardens
Education Farm Advisory Committee		Restoration of native habitat
Marin Disability Group		Horticultural therapy, senior access
MCOE School-to-Career Program		Internships; job training opportunities

Participants were asked to rate 12 additional ideas that emerged from the visioning sessions. The following themes received the highest ranking:

1. Program that emphasizes 'green' energy systems
2. Program for restoration of native habitat
3. Summer program for students
4. Botanic garden for all ages
5. Multi-generational community activities



Slide Ranch

Existing Education Programs in Marin

A collection of information on the current status of site-based education programs was completed by the *Marin Agriculture and Education Coordination Project*. Results from this study were used by the Education Farm and Garden Feasibility Study to determine gaps and duplication of services.

Representatives from each of the programs were then interviewed to update the information and record future plans. With few exceptions, nearly all programs have been designed for kindergarten through 6th grade students. A comprehensive program for older students has not been developed in Marin at this time.

Table 1
Site-based Education Programs in Marin & Annual Participation

Slide Ranch (k – 5 th)	2,500	4-H Nutrition prog. (5 th – h.s.)	887
Marin Art and Garden (1 st - 3 rd)	600	Devil’s Gulch Ranch (k – 5 th)	250
Walker Creek Ranch (5 th – 6 th)	1,800	Windrush Farm (k – 5 th)	250
Permaculture Institute- older students	260	Marin Food Systems Project(k – 6 th)	1,000
Green Gulch – students & y. adults	250	4-H clubs (k – 6 th)	1,745
MALT (k – 6 th)	600	College of Marin(envir. & ag classes)	500 – 1,000
Marin Farmers Market (k – 5 th)	1,350	Environ. Ed. Council of Marin (all)	1,000
Marin Conserv. Corps (6 th – adult)	260	Headlands Institute (4 th – 7 th)	800
Marin Organic (mostly k – 6 th)	600	UC Master Gardeners (k – 6 th)	2,488

* Unknown how many students participated in multiple site visits

For enrollment reference:

Number of students in Marin Public Schools (2003-04)

Kindergarten:	2,153	Grade 5:	2,181	Grade 10:	2,222
Grade 1:	2,074	Grade 6:	2,265	Grade 11:	2,123
Grade 2:	2,130	Grade 7:	2,255	Grade 12:	2,031
Grade 3:	2,125	Grade 8:	2,398	Total:	28,418
Grade 4:	2,098	Grade 9:	2,374	Does not include over 3,000 private school student	

Model Programs in California

Over the past six months the MAEA steering committee visited a number of model programs in the Bay Area and interviewed others in central and southern California to gather information on best practices for the feasibility study. Listed below is a brief summary of the visits or interviews that could be applied to a project in Marin.

Site Visits & Number of Annual Participants/Visitors

Hidden Villa – Los Altos	33,657	Hansen Trust – Faulkner Farm, Ventura	4,000
Edible Schoolyard – Berkeley	-----	San Louis Obispo Botanic Garden	
Occidental Arts and Ecology Center	3,000	Copia – Napa	180,000
Fairview Gardens, Goleta	5,500		
UC Berkeley Botanic Garden	45,000		



Hidden Villa

Non-profit 1,600 wilderness preserve and organic farm (6 acres under cultivation) featuring environmental education that includes farm tours for school-aged children (preschool through 6th grade), weekend activities, an international hostel facility and a summer camp program. Last year 20,000 children and adults participated in the core program. An additional 13,657 attended the Farm Tour Program including 3,872 adults (teachers and parents). There are five full-time naturalists (teachers) and five interns as well as 90 volunteers that support the daily visits of 200 students. There are 40 paid staff members that include interns (on-site living facility), teachers, an on-site farmer, two caretakers and administration. Part of the administration team includes a full time program evaluator,

and two development (fund raising) personnel.

Occidental Arts and Ecology Center

Non-profit 80 acres of wild lands and gardens privately purchased 30 years ago by a group to develop horticultural, educational and advocacy programs. There are two organic gardens that supply food for the families who live on-site. Seed is also harvested for their extensive seed bank. The site has over 3,000 annual visitors that attend gardening classes, workshops, plant sales, and live performance. There are no school tours given, but each year OAEC provides a summer teacher training institute that includes two follow-up visits to each of the 15 to 20 participating elementary schools during the year. Staffing includes 13 full-time positions with full time grant writer.

UC Berkeley Botanic Garden

Non-profit garden on 34 acres contains 13,000 species and varieties of plants from all over the world that are arranged by region of origin. Last year the garden's corps of 85 docents led tours for 17,500 k-12 children and adults. In total, there were 45,000 visitors to the garden – most pay an entrance fee. The *Friends of the Garden* is an auxiliary group that sponsors fundraising events and involves the general public in volunteer activities such as propagating, plant sales and the gift shop. The education program includes curriculum for kindergarten through 12th grade students. A card system has been developed that links all the garden/environment lessons to the California Content Standards

particularly for math and science. Teachers who attend the summer institute use the cards for study throughout the year.



Copia

Copia is a non-profit cultural center and museum whose mission is to investigate and celebrate the culture of wine, food and the arts. The organic edible garden on four acres is arranged in 50' x 50' beds and is designed to provide learning about soils, bio-diversity, food production and sustainable agriculture. *Copia Kids*, a children's program for 3rd through 5th grade students was piloted this year. The program features an area with herb, flower and vegetable beds, a fruit orchard, a chicken coup, rabbit hutch, compost bins and a habitat walk. The facility features exhibits, lecture/theater hall, restaurant and café.

The Edible Schoolyard

The Edible Schoolyard is a non-profit organization that operates out of the Martin Luther King Middle School in Berkeley. Their mission is to create and sustain an organic garden and landscape that is wholly integrated into a public school's curriculum. It involves students in all aspects of farming the garden, preparing, serving and eating the food. Over 900 students rotate through the program which uses a portable building on the campus adjacent to the garden to house a cooking classroom. Students also receive class instruction in the garden that is linked to various subjects. This program has been a trailblazer for the school garden movement in California and beyond.



Hansen Trust (Faulkner Farms)

The goal of the Hansen Ag Learning Center at the 27 acre Faulkner Farm is to enhance the economic viability of agriculture in the county, increase the public's understanding and support of agriculture and encourage the study and discussion of agriculture issues to inform policy decisions. The center was created from a bequest to the University of California by Thelma Hansen in 1997. The endowment is approximately \$22 million dollars, with an annual interest distribution of about \$942,660. The center sponsors teachers' agriculture seminars in the summer, harvest field trips, and study trips that focus on curriculum for 4th and 5th grade students. The farm has 5 acres of organic row-crop fields and demonstration beds.



Fairview Gardens

Fairview Gardens is a non-profit 12.5 acre organic farm that was established in 1997 to preserve the agricultural heritage of the area and provide the local community with fresh fruits and vegetables. The site offers cooking and gardening classes, workshops, farm festivals, tours, lectures, apprenticeships, and consultation to schools.

San Luis Obispo Botanic Garden

The San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden mission is to display the diverse plant life of the five Mediterranean climate zones of the world and to provide opportunities for education, recreation, conservation and research. The 150 acre garden is located on public land with a 40-year renewable lease with the county.

The garden supplies plants to the county for local parks and landscaping. In 2004, ground was broken for the education center which is a model of sustainable design, including straw bale construction, passive solar heating, and on-site waste-water treatment. A one-acre preview garden was constructed by Cal Poly students providing a place for educational programs, demonstrations and special activities for children. All educational materials for kindergarten through 12th grade, are aligned with the Science Content Standards and also are integrated with language arts, social studies and math lesson plans.



Project Financials

This financial analysis report provides two potential scenarios for the Marin Farm and Garden Project. The first option as discussed in the March 2006 *Recommendations for the Marin Farm and Garden Project*, Option A, demonstrates how the Marin Farm and Garden Project, “the Project” can act as a partner to the Marin Farmer’s Market Pavilion. In this arrangement, the Project can serve as the educational division for the Marin Farmer’s Market or operate independently under the umbrella of the Marin Farmer’s Market 501© (3). In either case, it will share a site and a number of resources. Option B depicts the Project as its own nonprofit entity in which case the Project have significantly higher expenses related to building materials; planning, permit and inspection fees; professional labor fees; land rent; capital equipment purchases and financing expenses. This analysis projects out five years and begins with the assumption that the project will begin in 2007.

Option A: Partnering with Marin Farmer’s Market Pavilion

In Option A the Project will serve primarily as an educational component to the Marin Farmer’s Market Pavillion. In this model, the variety of educational programs listed can provide revenue to help offset operational expenses. While non-fee programming may also be provided, additional staff and resource expenses are not covered in this report. The details of each section are discussed below.

Table 1. Option A: Five Year Summary Revenue and Expense Projections

Summary Option A					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Revenues		\$87,150	\$144,000	\$256,500	\$344,300
Operating Expenses					
Startup	\$90,500				
Ongoing	\$146,500	\$158,785	\$164,697	\$170,596	\$176,513
Finance Expenses	\$4,327	\$4,327	\$4,327		
Net Revenue	-\$241,327	-\$75,962	-\$25,024	\$85,904	\$167,787

Revenues:

Revenues can be generated in two categories: Educational Programs and Plant and Seed Sales. In regards to educational programs, the Project can offer a variety of courses, workshops and even a day camp which all can bring in revenue. Below is a description of the types of offerings.

Educational Program

Certification classes may be offered as part of the curriculum. Typically, certification involves coursework over a period of time – perhaps two weeks to a year depending upon the certification requirements. Topics may include gardening, permaculture, green building and alternative energy. As a point of reference, one particular certification course is a two week intensive permaculture class with tuition fees averaging \$1,000 in the Bay Area.

Workshops may be offered and generally run from two hours to a day. They may include, for example, specific uses of gardening tools or cooking classes. This report assumes that fifty (50) workshops are offered in the first year,

averaging one workshop per week. The \$25 workshop fee (2008) is intended to be affordable while covering course materials.

A third educational offering may be Day Camp. These classes are typically held in the summer and usually are taught over a one to two week period.

Plant and Seed Sales

A second revenue generating stream may be in plant and seed sales which may include six pack, four inch, and one, five and fifteen gallon containers offering organic fruit trees, vegetable and flowering and native plants.

Operating Expenses: Startup:

First year startup expenses will run approximately \$90,000. Buildings and infrastructure will account for 50% of this figure, most of which is related to infrastructure that includes wheelchair and handicap accessible paths, an irrigation system, fencing and soil amendment.

The second largest startup expense, twenty seven (27%) percent, relates to professional fees. Legal fees of \$5,000 will likely be necessary to advise on issues regarding the legal partnership and various aspects of operating the business. Consultant fees of \$20,000 for soil testing and amendment, irrigation and garden design will be needed in order to properly plan, design and build the gardens. A small retainer has been set aside for each subsequent year should additional questions or issues need to be addressed by these consultants.

The last twenty-three (23%) percent of startup expenses represents office equipment and furniture, temporary housing and costs for the initial purchase of plants and trees for the farm. The office equipment includes two to three computers at \$2,500 a piece including software and warranties. Two to three desks, chairs and a set of file cabinets make up the furniture needs. The mobile trailer with utility hookup will house the administrative staff while buildings are under construction.

Table 2. Option A: Startup Expenses

Startup Expenses		
Buildings/Infrastructure	\$45,000	50%
Professional Fees	\$25,000	27%
Office Equipment	\$11,000	12%
Temporary housing	\$2,500	3%
Plants & Seed Bank	\$7,000	8%
Total Startup Expenses	\$90,500	100%

Operating Expenses: Ongoing:

Eighty-five (85%) percent of ongoing operational expenses are for salaries, benefits and compensation which include two full time and one part time employee; the full time staff consists of the Executive Director and Farm Expert; the part time employee is an administrative assistant. Farm and garden supplies account for eight (8%) of costs, of which tools and mechanical equipment make up the greatest portion at roughly \$5,000. Annual seed banks, plant nursery and propagation support both the farm and plant sales and include labor and material costs.

Utility expenses include electrical requirements for pumps and farm machinery. The larger expense will likely be water, in which the report assumes \$1,000 per month for the six-month growing period for two to three acres of irrigation needs.

Office supply expenses are nominal and include standard supplies like paper, printer cartridges, stationery, etc.

Table 3. Option A: Ongoing Expenses

Ongoing Expenses		
Salaries, Benefits & Compensation	\$125,000	85%
Farm & Garden	\$11,000	8%
Utilities	\$8,000	5%
Office Supplies	\$2,500	2%
Total Ongoing Expenses	\$146,500	100%

Option A Summary:

Operating expenses for the first year of this project should run under \$250,000 including startup expenses of \$90,000 and ongoing expenses of \$146,000. As classes and plant sales begin in the second year, revenues will offset operational expenses so that at the end of year #2 (2008) the net loss is \$76,000. By the end of the third year (2009), revenues almost meet expenses with a net loss of \$25,000. By the end of the fourth (2010) the Project will become profitable, with a net of \$85,000. Somewhere within the sixth year of operation, the Project will have reached its break-even point

Option B: Stand Alone 501©3 Nonprofit Entity:

Option B consists of the Project operating as its own 501©3 nonprofit organization which will require additional expenses. First year expenses are significantly higher in this scenario as additional costs associated with building materials, planning, permit and inspection fees of \$156,000; professional labor expenses from the contractor and architect of \$350,000; legal expenses associated with setting up the nonprofit of \$15,000; and capital equipment expenses of \$85,000 to \$100,000 add up to start up costs of over \$700,000. Additional ongoing expenses include higher operations and maintenance costs for upkeep of the capital equipment and additional financing fees for the capital equipment purchases. As shown in the table below, revenues would not meet expenses for at least the first four years. Because of the high costs of building materials, labor and land acquisition in the Bay Area, and the relatively small revenue stream from educational classes and plant sales, this model would probably not reach its breakeven point for ten to fifteen years. Thus our recommendation is to work with Option A.

Table 4. Option B: Five-Year Summary Revenue and Expense Projections

Option B Summary					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Revenues		\$87,150	\$132,300	\$237,075	\$323,529
Operating Expenses					
Startup	\$705,250				
Ongoing	\$251,000	\$267,165	\$273,426	\$279,720	\$286,242
Finance Expenses	\$22,420	\$164,048	\$22,420	\$18,093	\$0
Net Revenue	-\$978,670	-\$344,063	-\$163,545	-\$60,738	\$37,287

APPENDIX



Alignment to the Marin Countywide Plan

The proposed *Marin Education Farm and Garden Project*, is closely aligned with seven of the ten guiding principles found in the Marin Countywide Plan. Commissioned by the *Marin County Board of Supervisors*, the *Marin Community Foundation*, and the *Buck Institute for Education*, the feasibility study addresses the economic goals, environmental and social benefits that the county aspires to for its residents.

The general guiding principles of the CWP can be found online at www.co.marin.ca.us. Listed below are examples of how closely the project relates to the Countywide Plan.

1. **“Link equity, economy, and the environment locally, regionally and globally. We will improve the vitality of our community, economy, and environment. We will seek innovations that provide multiple benefits to Marin County”.**

On a site located in the City-Centered Corridor along Highway 101, an organic farm could serve as a community educational and job training center, with an emphasis on sustainable energy and green building practices that address all the elements of this first guiding principle. A large site would also have the potential for an agricultural park to foster and support local farmers, provide community gardens, a botanical garden/arboretum, animals and a restaurant with organic offerings. As an innovative model for California and beyond, Marin residents would benefit on an economic, ecological and social basis.

2. **“Use finite and renewable resources efficiently and effectively.”**

Not only will the project be built using green and sustainable principles, but the educational purposes of the project will be to help residents of all ages, from school children to elders, to learn how to incorporate these practices into their own daily lives. Programs will include composting, home gardens, organic practices, recycling, habitat restoration, sustainable energy projects and healthy eating. All these programs align with this guiding principle of effective use of our resources.

3. **“Steward our natural and agricultural assets. We will continue to protect open space and wilderness, and enhance habitats and bio-diversity. We will protect and support agricultural lands and activities and provide markets for fresh, locally grown food.”**

In the update to the Countywide Plan under The Natural System Elements, 2.10 – Agriculture and Food the following policies are set out.

- Promote organic certification
- Promote small-scale diversification
- Support organic agriculture
- Expand agricultural processing
- Market local products
- Promote small-scale crop production
- Preserve and promote mariculture
- Facilitate the generational transfer of agricultural land
- Increase knowledge of agriculture

The plan also addresses community food security. Its aim is to increase the diversity and local consumption of locally produced foods so that all residents have access to a healthy diet from sustainable sources by:

- Support of local food production
- Promoting local and organic food
- Enhancing food security education

These policies will be achieved by implementing programs that:

- Encourage community gardens
- Promote edible landscaping
- Use organic foods in county services
- Promote organic food in schools

As seen, the CWP places great emphasis on the importance of local agriculture for the well being of local residents. In supporting these programs, the proposed *Marin Education Farm and Garden Project* would provide a central meeting place where many of these educational programs would be housed and site-based projects would be available to more people than are currently being served by existing programs.

4. “Foster businesses that provide a balance of economic, environmental and social benefits. We will retain, expand and attract a diversity of businesses that meet the needs of our residents and strengthen our economic base.”

A Marin site would provide work and job training to a diverse number of people. One of the organizations working closely with the *Organic Farm and Garden Feasibility Study* is the Marin Conservation Corps. They share a vision for a site that includes both education and training of the young adults in their program. Reuse, recycling and restoration are a primary focus of the MCC program. Forging partnerships with many organizations is an important goal of the *Marin Education Farm and Garden Feasibility Study*.

One of the elements of the CWP is to encourage small scale and diverse crop production in areas of Marin that need open space buffers and have been recognized to have prime agricultural soils. This coincides well with the aim of the project to be located in the central part of Marin along the 101 corridor. The Agricultural Element of the CWP recognizes that agricultural lands in the Bayfront Conservation Zone in the City-Centered Corridor are an agricultural resource and should be preserved. Policies call for identifying these lands and mitigating the impact of development on agricultural productivity.

Most of the agricultural land now in use is in West Marin. The county has set a goal to acquire more open space and agricultural land in the City-Centered Corridor. The Open Space Program targets land in each of the three environmental corridors to be reserved as permanent public open space for recreational or environmental protection purposes. Targets have actually been exceeded in the Inland Rural and Coastal Recreation Corridors due to federal and State parkland purchases, however, only 56% of the land has been acquired in the City-Centered Corridor, including all lands owned by public and quasi-public agencies. The Open Space Program identifies a number of techniques for achieving the desired targets, such as transfer of development rights, zoning regulation, gift, dedication, or purchase of lands by the Open Space district or other public entity. Finding property for agricultural purposes is in total alignment with the countywide plan for preserving open space and adding agricultural acreage to this area of Marin.

5. “Educate and prepare our workforce and residents. We will make high quality education, workforce preparation and lifelong learning opportunities available to all sectors of our community. We will help all children succeed in schools, participate in civic affairs, acquire and retain well-paying jobs, and achieve economic independence.

This principle is well represented in the *Organic Farm and Garden Feasibility Study*. The project will provide opportunities for job training as well as community service learning, summer school, college classes, and accessibility for the disadvantaged and disabled. It would truly be a center for the community.

6. “Cultivate ethnic, cultural and socio-economic diversity. ...We will build vibrant communities, enact programs to maintain, share and appreciate our cultural differences and similarities.”

There is a commonality in food that crosses all socio-economic and cultural lines. An organic farm and its food production have the ability to bring people together like no other element. The potential exists to learn from and honor cultivation that embodies cultural differences and to share in ethnic customs that all have food at their core. One could also imagine students with the *Marin Conservation Corps* interacting with seniors at a community garden plot, interns from a homeless shelter working at the farm harvesting gleanings for school lunches with students gaining community service experience from high school. The opportunities are endless for the interaction between different ages, different cultures and different socio-economic groups.

7. “Support public health, safety and social justice. We will live in healthy, safe communities and provide equal access to amenities and services.”

By making healthy, organic food more accessible, through local production, community gardens and gleanings, by teaching people how to grow their own food, by the interactions and help people will give each other through these programs, the *Marin Farm and Garden Project* would be a major vehicle for promoting public and social justice. Each group will bring to the project its own abilities and sensibilities to share and to learn.

Project Methodology



Public Visioning Sessions

The first step in the study process was to bring all interested parties and stakeholders together in an advisory mode to discuss the potential for an Education Farm and Garden in Marin. This group's ideas and visions were the foundation from which the study team began to assemble data for the project.

After conducting two Advisory Committee sessions, one in February, 2005 sponsored by the *Marin Agriculture and Education Alliance*, and a second in April that took place at the *Marin County Office of Education*, a wide range of ideas and goals were gathered. More than 100 community members participated in these sessions representing non-profit organizations, educators, leaders from business and government and community advocates.

At each of the sessions, small working groups listed potential ideas for the project, prioritized them and then shared this list with the larger group. The end result was a collection of broad-based themes that the steering committee could refine for the next phase of surveys and focus groups.

One or more participants from each of the organizations listed below attended the February and/or April 2005 visioning sessions for the Education Farm and Garden project.

AmeriCorps	Green Gulch Farm	Marin County Farm Bureau
Audubon Canyon Ranch	InSync	Paradise Valley Produce
Bay Area Discovery Museum	Manka's Inverness Lodge	Parents – School Garden Coord. Proj.
Buck Institute for Education	Marin Organic	Permaculture Institute of N. California
College of Marin	Marin Montessori	Roth/Lamotte – Landscape Arch.
Community Members at Large	Marin County Office of Education	San Geronimo Valley Com. Center
Corda Dairy	Marin County Agriculture Commission	San Francisco Zen Center
Devil's Gulch Ranch	Marin County Bd. Of Supervisors	Drake High School – 20 students
Edible Schoolyard	Marin Agriculture Land Trust	Slide Ranch
Educators from 6 districts	Marin Conservation Corps	STRAW Project
Environ. Education Council of Marin	Marin Food Systems Project	UC Masters Gardeners
ETC	Marin County Farmers Market	UC Cooperative Extension
Farmer/Marin Organic	Marin Community Foundation	UC Berkeley Botanic Garden
Four-H Youth Development Program	Marin Agriculture and Education Alliance	Walker Creek Ranch
Green Impact	Marin County Outdoor School	Western United Dairymen
		Windrush Farm



Public Visioning Meeting, February 17, 2005

Implementation of Surveys and Focus Groups

Survey and Focus Groups

The goal in conducting surveys was to prioritize the main themes from the advisory meetings and ensure that educators and other participating agencies were represented by multiple voices. The MAEA steering committee developed a survey on May 18, 2005 and a list of participants that would reflect the diversity of Marin County residents.

Surveys

Surveys were first administered to teachers and educators during May and June of 2005 before the close of the school year. Teachers participating in the surveys were broken into five sub-set groups: kindergarten through 2nd grade, 3rd through 5th grade, middle school, teachers in kindergarten through 8th grade schools, and high school teachers. Approximately one third of the surveys mailed were returned via pre-stamped envelopes. There were 51 returns from a mailing of about 155 surveys. With the exception of just a few returns, everyone who took the survey was able to respond accurately, which made the tabulation of results very straightforward.

Teacher surveys were completed by groups throughout the summer and into the fall. Many groups completed surveys and then held a follow-up meeting was held in order to share results. These meetings were facilitated by project consultants, Sandy Neumann and Patti Vance

Focus Groups

Focus groups were especially useful for groups that were unable to take the survey, either because of a language barrier, or the small size of their group. Questions that specifically addressed the needs of each of the groups were always included in the discussion.

Listed below are the names of the groups that participated in the survey and focus groups study.

Table 1 – Participants in Surveys(S) and/or Focus(F) Sessions

Marin Conservation Corps, S & F	Pickleweed Advisory Committee, S & F
Marin County Green Building Planning Div. F	Ed Farm Project Advisory Committee, S
Marin County Health and Human Services, F	Sir Francis Drake High School – students & staff, S & F
MCOE – School to Career Program, S	STRAW Project Teacher Network, S
Marin County Teachers, k – 12 grades, S	The Redwoods Retirement Center, F
Marin Farmers and Ranchers, S & F	UC Extension – Master Gardeners, S
Marin Food Systems Project, Teachers, S	Disabilities Group of Marin, S & F
Marin Montessori School, F	
Mary Silveira School, S & F	

Existing Agricultural and Environmental Programs in Marin, 2006

Program	Mission/Goals	Program	Target Population	Number Served	Future Plans	Possible Involvement with Education Farm Project
College of Marin Marincc.ca.us	Provide education opportunities for all students and community members; provide workforce educ. And basic skills develop.	<i>Agriculture in Marin</i> class is offered every 3 years; Environmental science classes in environmental landscaping/horticulture, design and ecology.	Post-secondary & re-entry students; adults	Agriculture class-30 students; Environmental landscaping, design and ecology plus internships – Approx. 500-1000	Looking at a plan to develop vegetable garden at Kentfield campus, then a possible expansion to Indian Valley campus	Interested in 2 + 2 program with links to high school; possible on-site classes at an Ed Farm center
Devil's Gulch Ranch Devilsgulchranch.Com	Sustainable & diversified agricultural ranch that produces wine grapes, fruits & vegetables, animals and wind power on 65 acres	Hosts school farm visits for k – 6 th grade students. Summer farm camp	Kindergarten through 5 th grade Camp – children ages 6 – 17	250 students served on farm tours Summer camp – 150 children	Unknown	Unknown at this time
Environmental Education Council of Marin (EECOM) EECOM.net	Build coalition of youth & adults committed to preserving the diverse environments in Marin through education stewardships & sharing of resources	Integrating environ. Educ. Into schools; Marin Food Systems Project; Environ. Youth Council; K-8 web-based resource project; Team Environ. Media Network; Creating sustainable businesses	Environmental and community groups, schools & businesses	1,000 low-income students; less directly with thousands in schools; hundreds of adults; high school – 60; also middle school stud.	New director in 2005; Stabilize existing programs and strengthen community ties	Would consider locating main offices to an Environmental –Ag center if there were a broader scope beyond the farm – would like to see a compelling place for people to observe innovative practices in sustainable living that would serve as a clearing house for green services & environ. Organizations.
Green Gulch Zen Center Sfzc.org	Zen practices for students, visitors, lay people, priests & monks	Public programs – classes, workshops, retreat center, garden & nursery open to public; Outreach to young people, prisoners, those in recovery & homeless. Food at Its Source (Farm); Life in the Garden; Land and Its Communities	School visits – preschool to university. Mostly day visits; some overnight up to 5 nights.	850 students	In the process of re-evaluating the education program; will be offering a young adult coming-of-age support program	Unknown at this time
Headlands Institute Yni.org	Dedicated to providing educational adventures in nature's classroom to inspire a personal connection to the natural world and actions to sustain it.	1. Field science prog. (with 5 different emphases); also pre and post-trip in-school lessons for local classes ("CCT") 2. Teen leadership program ("TEAM") and winter teen environ. Leadership conference ("Youth Quest") 3. K-12 teacher training (co-sponsored by National Park Service) "EETP"	K-12 but mostly 4 th thru 7 th grade students TEAM – teen leadership for high school Teacher training program	4 th – 7 th - 10,000 Bay Area students annually (800 in Marin) TEAM – 30 high school students Teachers – 40 annually	Continue to focus on underserved students in San Francisco and Bay Area Develop multicultural marine curriculum and resources	Open to collaboration; supportive of the Ed Farm concept especially food production element. Possible cross-over with their dining hall/food service

Program	Mission/Goals	Program	Target Population	Number Served	Future Plans	Possible Involvement with Education Farm Project
Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT) Malt.org	MALT acquires agricultural conservation easements on farmland in voluntary transactions with landowners. MALT also encourages public policies that support and enhance agriculture.	MAEA Programs - 1. Summer Agricultural Institute for Teachers 2. Farm Field Studies Program 3. Marin Agriculture and Education Coordination Project 4. Support for the Marin Food System Project	Marin elementary teachers; K – 6 th grade students Adult programs-county residents	Institute for teachers – 15 Farm field trips- 600 students; Adults – 3,000	Assessment of present education program; Study costs of developing a classroom at a farm site	Future involvement with Ed Farm Project would depend on the program offering
Marin Art & Garden Center Maagc.org	Promote awareness of nature & understanding of ecological systems. Through the use of demonstration gardens as educational sites, children and adults explore the importance of habitat, conservation and stewardship.	Composting demonstration, Native plant garden; Low-water use garden; Native Medicinal herb garden; Propagation of 500 CA native & habitat plants for school gardens; Butterfly/Habitat Garden; Riparian restoration project Habitat Garden Camp	1 st – 3 rd grades; training for UC Master Gardeners; Adult programs Camp 6-9 yr. Olds	600 students; 12 high school internships; 200 Master Gardeners; Adult classes and events – 300 Camp – 600 students	Will be adding kindergarten and up to 5 th grade program in the future; Would like to have an adult gardening school Would like to have a botanic garden to fund their future	Could benefit from trained interns being placed at MAAGC
Marin Farmers Market Marincountyfarmersmarkets.org	Outdoor market with over 150 vendors that showcases high quality, farm fresh items – also fine arts & crafts. . Year-round market at Civic Center; Seasonal markets in Fairfax, Novato, downtown San Rafael, Oakland, Hayward & Fremont	Education program – class field trips to the Civic Center market	All class grades are welcome for tours (mostly K – 5 th grades) Tours also include adults	Approx. 1,350 students	Working towards a permanent pavilion site in the next 3 – 5 years that will be named the Marin Center for Sustainable Agriculture; will be 5 – 10 million capital fund drive. Want to incorporate a classroom for visits	Will want to work with future Ed Farm project – share many of the same goals such as year-round availability of farm produce and showcasing of local farm products
Marin Organic Marinorganic.org	Marin Organic’s mission focuses on the environmental soundness and economic viability of farming and ranching in Marin. Committed to creating the first all-organic county in the nation.	Farm Tours; Organic school lunch program; Farm Apprenticeship Program; Supporting business membership; On the farm workshops; Retail education; Pt. Reyes Farmers Market	Anyone who touches food; Farm tours & school lunch program - elementary schools	Coordinates with the MALT farm field study program (600)	Emphasis on Organic school lunch program; Expansion of Biodiesel & compost; Marin residents will know 3 farmers by name and face; Effort to keep local farms in business	Focus of county efforts should be in support of existing programs and farms rather than another new site. Find ways to facilitate farm visits via buses, other publicity.

Program	Mission/Goals	Program	Target Population	Number Served	Future Plans	Possible Involvement with Education Farm Project
Marin Conservation Corps Marincc.org	Develop youth and conserve natural resources for a strong, sustainable community. Accomplished through: education, civic engagement, leadership and employability.	Includes: Youth in Environmental Education; Corps to Career; Restoration and Ecosystem Management; Natural Resource Crews; Recycle; Educational Opportunities; For Earth’s Sake; Project Regeneration	Program for children, teens and adults. GED high school program, Post-secondary opportunities	6 th grade through adult: 11,000 8,000 school children 3,000 community volunteers 250 young adults	In process of looking for a facility or land for a future home site for MCC. Has developed a master plan for an environmental education facility	Wants to explore ways that an Ed Farm and MCC could work together. Share many of the same goals in education conservation, green practices, internships and job training. Would like to explore shared housing at a central site where many services could be offered.
Marin Food Systems Project Eecom.net	Committed to fostering awareness of Marin’s agricultural heritage and future through a dynamic curriculum linking school gardens, local farmers, public education, community agencies and the environment. It also promotes family health.	Project supports schools to integrate and implement agricultural education; Healthy food service program that includes model salad bar program; Nutrition education; School garden program and garden curriculum.	Primarily elementary schools; school food service facilities and operations; families	1,000 students in 3 San Rafael schools & Marin City; Over last few years 100 teachers; 2,000 parents; Adults in food services	Food Systems Project is conducting a pilot survey in collaboration with the Marin School Nurses Organization to assess nutrition related programs and infrastructure.	Would like to see a center such as an Ed Farm where all services and non-profits are housed under the same roof. The Food Systems Project shares many of the same goals as the Ed Farm – Ag awareness, healthy food for children and adults
Permaculture Institute of Northern California permacultureinstitute.com	The Institute is an educational organization promoting sustainable technologies and methodologies. It draws on the tools and teachings of the permaculture design	“4 Seasons” permaculture training; Regenerative Design & Nature Awareness training; Eco- Agriculture at New College; Integral Awareness series	New College students; young adults	Permaculture training: 200 students; Regenerative Design training – 27 students; Eco-Ag prog. W/ New College: 25	Looking for funding for the Commonweal Garden. Need a yurt/classroom and an upgrade of the barn for workshops.	Met to consider the possibility of working with the Ed Farm. PINC and Ed Farm have their own agendas but agreed that more can be accomplished by working together. A site centrally located in Marin would suit their purposes well.
Slide Ranch Slideranch.org	Every bite of food connects us to the soil, sun, water, and air, and to the people who work to feed us. Slide Ranch teaches respect and responsibility for sustaining these connections.	Programs to a wide range of groups, including schools, community service groups, youth programs, and social service organizations. One-day, overnight, and multiple-day programs are available. Weekend program for families, adults	K – 5 th grade school classes; Weekend family programs; Summer camp program	Approx. 7,000 children, teens and adults were served last year. Approx. 2,333 of those were from Marin	Slide is required by GGNRP to complexly rebuild existing site infrastructure and buildings. A capital campaign was initiated in 2000 for this purpose	Slide would prefer that resources were expended on existing programs in Marin rather than starting a new site, but sees many opportunities to collaborate should the project move forward.
SEED SEED.org	To enhance environmental education of students through the use of trained volunteers and community resources	Train volunteer docents; Provide teacher access to free education materials; Enhance environ awareness of parents & community	K – 6 th grade	Approx. 2,500 in 23 schools	In process of strategic planning for the future; Want to continue promoting environ. Field trips	A central location would facilitate more experiential trips for students that receive support from SEED.

Program	Mission/Goals	Program	Target Population	Number Served	Future Plans	Possible Involvement with Education Farm Project
UC Cooperative Extension Cemarin.ucdavis.edu	Mission is to sustain a vital agriculture, environment, and community in Marin by providing University of California research-based information in agriculture, natural resource management, nutrition, and youth development	6 program areas: -Organic and Sustainable Agriculture -4 –H Youth Development -Urban Horticulture Program & Master Gardeners -Sudden Oak Death Coordination -Nutrition education for low income youth ; -Watersheds and water quality	4-H Program, ages 6 – 19; Nutrition prog. In schools; 276 farms and ranches UC Master Gardeners	4-H Program – 1,745; 2,000 K-5 students at annual farm day School nutrition program – 887; 3, 223 adults served in 35 workshops and events annually Master Gardeners class-35	Strengthen long-term viability of agriculture; Reduce public and industry reliance on toxic pesticides; 3. Improve county response to SOD; 4. Improve water quality in Tomales Bay with science based research & information; 5.Develop hands-on project based environ. Education and life skills prog. For youth.	The farm project study details and focus are incomplete at this time, so it’s difficult to say what exactly UCCE role will be. UCCE is most interested in strengthening the work with; our current programs than initiating a new project that may not be sustainable or in the interests of existing programming.
UC Master Gardeners Cemarin.ucdavis.edu	The Marin Master Gardeners is a trained group of volunteers with a shared love of gardening and horticulture. Through community service and educational outreach, they provide community organizations with the knowledge and skills to create a healthy environ.	School Environmental Education Docents (SEED); School gardens; Creek restoration; Senior resident facilities; Marin Art & Garden Center; 13,013 hours in community service projects annually	Elementary schools-kindergarten thru 6 th grade; Community at large	220 active volunteers 22 local schools; annually reaching 166 teachers and 2,488 students	Will be expanding present program; more public visibility through seminars and expansion of website that will address test problems for community gardeners; Further the integrated pest management program	Could focus on helping with the design and installation of the project; Could serve as docents for school and adult groups
Walker Creek Ranch Walkercreekranch.org	Dedicated to providing quality instruction within a learning environment that inspires and motivates students to achieve an appreciation of the natural world. The Outdoor School enhances a student’s critical thinking, processing, and socialization skills.	Outdoor School; Conference center for education, community and organizations; Rental facility; Camp Soulajule – summer program	Outdoor school, 5 th – 6 th grades; Conference center primarily adults; Social events mostly in the summer; Camp for 9 – 12 year olds	Marin 5 th & 6 th graders – 1,800 (including outside Marin – 5,000) 8,000 conference guests; Rentals – most weekends in the summer; Camp, about 600	Will continue to expand garden ed. Program; goal to hire full time agriculture coordinator; Ranch is at capacity, does not anticipate creating a day prog. Fees per student, transportation costs and location are deterrents to further program expansion	Could benefit from trained interns being placed at the Walker Creek garden project; Interest in purchasing organic produce for cafeteria as part of Marin Organic program
Windrush Farm	To expose students and adults to a farm experience that includes animals, natural fibers and hands-on learning.	Day visits by school classes; some adult and family tours	Kindergarten through 6 th grade	Approximately 600 students; some adult/family tours	Would like to create a classroom on the farm to teach about wool spinning and natural fibers	Unknown at this time.

Model California Programs Summary of Findings

While each of the sites offered their own unique programs, there were some characteristics that nearly all the sites had in common. Listed below are the Best Practices and Program Challenges for the programs that were studied.

Common Practices of Successful Farm and Garden Programs in California

- Diversified revenue base is critical to sustainability
- All programs were non-profit, 501(c3) with director & board
- Nearly all programs offered a summer camp for children
- All programs offered some kind of teacher training/institute and some had school follow-up
- Nearly every program had a strong volunteer corps (100 to 600 volunteers)
- Programs with facility rentals collected fees ranging from \$100,00 to \$250,000 annually
- Most programs offered adult classes, workshops and community events
- All programs had strong marketing and publicity materials
- Almost all programs had a development position on staff

Hidden Villa

Best practices:

Placement of full-time Hidden Villa teacher in Redwood City school to support on-site garden and environmental studies. Goal: to expand to every school in the future.

Strong summer camp program (1,000 students annually)

Exceptional 'green' design for chicken coup and straw-bale education meeting room.

Activities for schools; garden curriculum to go on the website.

Program challenges:

Never enough time for training and planning (especially new interns and naturalists)

Community outreach and fund raising needs to expand

Adult programs have not been that successful

Land is on open space preserve; there can be no membership drives.

Staff would like to expand facility rental capability, but limited by small meeting rooms.

CSA for 60 families is not completely successful: will try to work with Second Harvest instead

UC Berkeley Botanic Garden

Best Practices

Developed "Botany on a Plate" education program for economically disadvantaged schools

Strong volunteer program that raises over \$100,000 annually

Membership fees brought in over \$50,000 last year

All environmental & garden curriculum based on California Content Standards

Following the summer teacher institute, teachers receive on-site support during the next school year.

Edible gardens of the world – kids see what other kids eat.

Program Challenges

Fundraising – all education staff positions are funded through grants

Facility rentals tripled this year, but they would like to have a stronger marketing program

Limited parking for public events

Occidental Arts and Ecology Center

Best Practices

Excellent summer teacher training institute. This year, 109 school applicants for 20 spaces.

Seed bank includes 6,000 varieties that are used for schools and 3 lucrative plant sales each year.

Program Challenges:

Not able to provide services for all schools that apply for the summer training program.

Education director's position is only part-time.

Closed to the public except for special events – not enough parking & staff to accommodate daily use.

The Edible Schoolyard

Best Practices

Curriculum is being developed over the next 2 years that will integrate food into all school subjects. The Chez Panisse Foundation has contributed 3.8 million to underwrite this effort.

Brochures and literature on the program have been very well written.

Program challenges

Never enough time to serve all 900 students (student rotation – some must wait until the 3rd quarter)

Groceries for kitchen program can be costly. Most food is purchased offsite.

Some problems sustaining garden over the summer months.

Hansen Trust (Faulkner Farms)

Best Practices

Career day, “Future Connections in Agriculture” was attended by 120 students from throughout the county.

The program offers mini-grants for increasing agricultural literacy throughout the county. Most average \$750 for schools to create or enhance a school garden.

The Trust has partnered with the local Farms-to-School efforts and established salad bars in 17 elementary schools this year.

All but one of the on-site classes are free. Also no charges for facility use.

Program challenges

Staff time has been the most limiting resource.

Volunteers – Most are seniors, who are helpful in so many ways but, most don't like to weed the 5 acre organic garden (very time intensive).

Fairview Gardens

Best Practices

CSA provides food for 500 families

Offer casual drop-in self-guided tours with 23 different stations describing the farm and the work. The stations also include information on environmental issues such as biodiversity, pesticide use and soil erosion.

Program Challenges

Sustainability – very difficult to keep everything going. Internships are always changing

Summer program for children – have partnered with other organizations to make it a ‘go’

Approximately 85 to 90% of revenues are generated by the garden

San Luis Obispo Botanic Garden.

Best Practices

New education hall under construction (2.5 million) uses ‘green’ building materials and energy systems. Community college construction interns are helping with the building the structure.

Produced a DVD on the vision for the project as a marketing and fund raising tool.

Program Challenges

Must coordinate some of the construction with the junior college schedule to take advantage of free labor.

Small community of 40,000 people; limited deep pockets; broke ground with only 50% of funds raised.

Copia

Best Practices

Greenhouse provides on-going source of mature plants and vegetables for the demonstration garden.

Annual membership is approx. 6,000; is a major source of revenue

Program opened in 2001 – 360,000 visitors the first two years; down in 2003, up in 2004

Strong volunteer program – 250 registered volunteers.

Program Challenges

Large operating budget, hard to sustain (\$14.4 million in 2002, \$11.6 million for 2003)

Martial Cottle Agriculture Park

Best Practices

Preserves historical farm land in perpetuity with public access

Small acreage farmers will have use of land

Joint effort to purchase property between the County of Santa Clara and the California State Parks

State paid \$5 million to acquire 136 acre parcel of land; Santa Clara will develop, manage and operate .

Examples of Operating Budgets for California Programs

Program/ Organization (Operating Budget for 2004)	Total revenue and expenses for 2003	Fees for services Ticket sales	Individual donations/ Memberships	Foundation Grant & Corporate Donations	Community supported agriculture	Site rentals	Plant & seed sales	Product sales/ on site store	Other
Hidden Villa, Los Altos \$2,755,471	Revenue – 3,010,726 Expenses 2,569,824	200,873	936,860	Grants – 716,422 Corporate – 55,109	56,900	130,000	-----	-----	Summer camp – 165,328
Fairview Gardens, Goleta \$800,000	Revenue – 746,816 Expenses 793,797	-----	-----	-----	64,000	-----	16,000	720,000	-----
Hansen Trust Santa Paula \$1,019,675	endowment Revenue – 1,019,675 Expenses 708,602	700	1,000	Program operates on 22 million endowment interest distribution	-----	-----	-----	16,692	-----
Occidental Arts and Ecology \$675,000	Revenue – 481,506 Expenses 563,105	90,000	135,000	189,000	-----	-----	50,000	-----	In-kind donations = 25%, but not in cash flow
UC Berkeley Botanic Garden \$2,000,000	Part of Univ. Of CA Program	190,000		300,000	-----	68,000	64,000	33,000	Ticket sales – 225,000
Copia Napa	Revenue – 7,209,689 Expenses 19,649,395	Ticket sales- 1,660,477	Direct public support – 2,918,575 Membership- 480,082	4,500,520	-----	30,637	-----	Miscel 29,867	Restaurant 1,525,346

Expanded Results from the Surveys

Educators

The largest group of survey participants was k–12 teachers (total of 51 responses). Teachers in this group were asked to provide information on additional activities they would pursue with their classes. By ranking, these included:

1. Activities that complement existing classroom or school garden programs
2. Environmental restoration projects
3. Team/community building activities for students

Other significant results from the teacher survey include the following responses:

- *What do you foresee as impediments for participating in this program?*
- Transportation issues, 37.5% Time away from school, 37.5% Impact on curriculum, 25%
- *Indicate the importance of having a program that is aligned with California Content Standards.*
- Minimal importance, 8%; Significant importance 49%; Must have direct connection, 43%
- *Would a field trip participation fee (approx. \$2 to \$3 per student) restrict your participation?*
- Fee is not a problem, 64% Fee could pose a problem, 32% Fee would restrict participation, 4%
- *If program included resources for teachers, what kinds of services, training would be most useful?*
- Staff development activities, 58% Retreat facility for educators, 27% Program for teacher reflection and inspiration, 15%

Table 3 – Teacher Survey – Other activities you would pursue with your classroom

Program description	K thru 2 nd grade	3 rd thru 5 th grade	K thru 8 th grades	Middle school 6 th thru 8 th	High School 9 th thru 12 th
Activity to complement existing classroom or sch. Garden	1	1	1*	2	2
Environmental restoration project	2	3	2*	1	1
Team/community building activities for students	3	2	2*	6	3*
Integration of organically-grown food into sch. Lunch prog.	4*	4	1*	5	6
Culinary experience aligned with school curriculum	4*	5	3	3	5
Internships and job training opportunities for students	5	7	5	4	3*
Retreat center for classes	6	6	4	7	4

* indicates tie

Community Surveys and Focus Groups

The following is a brief summary of the highlights from the groups listed in table 1.

- Marin Conservation Corps – Internships and job training opportunities were the top priorities. A program that develops marketable skills related to 1) landscaping, 2) ‘green practice’ technologies such as solar installations, 3) enterprise and product management of a farm-produced item, 4) farm management skills and 5) food preparation/culinary training would benefit this organization.
- Marin Farmers and Agriculture Community – Most important element: 1) a program that includes curriculum with links to farms and agriculture and 2) green practices and sustainable living practices.
- UC Master Gardeners – Top priorities: 1) the integration of organically grown food into the school lunch program, 2) a program that assists/complements existing school gardens, and 3) a focus on environmental restoration projects.
- Marin County Teachers – Teachers ranked themes relating to the environment as the top priority for this project. Restoration projects and a program that would integrate environmental curriculum into existing classroom activities were deemed most valuable. Teachers also placed a strong emphasis on 2) learning about ‘green practices’ and sustainable living principles. Team/community building activities was the third most important prioritized theme.
- Marin County Green Building Planning Division – Build greater awareness among county residents that promote sustainable systems – building materials, energy systems, become as ‘green’ as possible. Would like to look into developing a reuse recycling center – money available that promotes waste diversion.
- Advisory Committee – 1) Program that emphasizes environmental principles, 2) ‘green practices’ and sustainable living principles and 3) restoration projects.
- Pickleweed Advisory Group – Most important: Accessibility. Project that is located within the community and within walking distance. 2) On-site job training in ‘green practice’ technology, landscaping and culinary skills was also important.
- Redwoods Retirement Center – Would like mobile program that serves the center. Hard to leave the center for many, but passionate about the value of their own organic garden at the facility.
- Marin Food Systems Project – Environmental restoration projects, 2) curriculum with links to farms and agriculture, and 3) a program emphasizing ‘green practices’ were the top ranked activities by teachers in this group. Also ranked high was the importance of activities that complement existing school gardens.
- STRAW Teachers – Teachers in this group ranked 1) environmental curriculum and restoration projects the highest. Also important was 2) a program that emphasized ‘green practices’ and sustainable living principles and 3) academic connections to food.
- MCS Disability Group – Most important theme – horticultural therapy for the disabled and access for seniors, homeless and minorities.
- Marin Montessori – An organic diversified crop farm for their middle school program that included a partnership with underserved students, sale of produce and elements that address stewardship of the land.
- Mary Silveira School – Program that supports their existing school garden program. Also important, teacher training and seedling flats for their fall garden when school resumes in September.

- Sir Francis Drake High School – Program that emphasizes ‘green practices’ and sustainable living was tied in ranking with the need for a program with academic connections to food. A project that promotes team/community building activities for students was also a top ranked them.
- MCOE School-to-Career Program – More internship opportunities that address environmental sciences. An accredited summer program for students that does not conflict with school-year constraints such as rigorous academic schedules, sports and jobs.
- Marin Health and Human Services – Emphasize social marketing program that promotes eating healthy and being active. Need to change our culture around eating through partnerships with the community. By the year 2010, the goal for the county is to reduce overweight and obesity from 34% to 5% for children ages 2-17, and to 12% from 30% for young adults ages 18-24.



Summary of Additional Findings

Youth and Adult Wellness

- Presently in Marin County, 34% of children ages 2 to 17 (10,500) are overweight or obese; for young adults 18 to 24 years old, the rate is 30%. If the current trend continues, of children born in 2000, 32.8% of boys and 38.5% of girls will develop diabetes, and close to 50% of African American and Hispanic children will develop diabetes in adulthood. (*2005 Marin Community Needs and Assessment Plan*)
- According to the *2002 Marin Community Health Survey* report, approximately 58% men ages 18-64 are overweight or obese and approximately 30% women are overweight/obese.

Environmental Education for Marin Students

- In Marin, fewer than 4% of the 14,303 students in grades 7th through 12th have participated in a school sponsored trip to an environmental education-based program. County programs are not designed for older students, in part due to conflicts with other school subjects and transportation. Recently, five of the eight public high schools in Marin modified their daily schedules to include longer 90-minute block periods that could facilitate off campus educational experiences.
- The MCOE *Quality Work-Based Learning Opportunities Program* would like to see more environmental placements for high school students to meet present requests. Students preparing for post-secondary education and career exploration would benefit from a greater exposure to environmental pathways.
- Middle school students have the fewest opportunities to visit off-site environmental programs* due to shorter class periods. A mobile education program would best serve this age group. (Prototype is being investigated in the East Bay by SAGE (Sustainable Agriculture Education Program) and the UC Berkeley Botanical Garden.
*(5th/6th grade participate in Walker Creek Ranch Program).

Agriculture/Farming

- A closer liaison between Marin residents and the farming community is necessary in order to support locally grown food, an appreciation for agricultural and it's role in our future. Fewer children of aging farming families are choosing to continue in agriculture which creates uncertainty for land use in the future.
- Creating positive memories is the most important concept to gain from an agricultural experience. Hands-on experiences on a farm or natural setting bring an appreciation for the land, farmers and importance of healthy food in our lives. We want participants of all ages to think, "I belong there", "I had fun there" or "I accomplished something there" when reflecting on their time at a farm site.

Social Impact Statement

- After compiling data from interviews with existing Marin programs, we found that one possible impediment for this project might be the competition for resources and recognition among the many service providers. This is a natural occurrence in terms of supply and demand. As this project moves through a process, it is our intention to become a model that encourages equal participation and respect among all the leaders. We will provide a communication process that is utilized in all our meetings and allows positive action and accomplishment to arise.

Mobile Education Unit

- The concept of a mobile system to educate a diverse audience about their choices and place in a healthy food system is being studied by *SAGE* and *UC Berkeley Botanic Garden* (steering committee members of the *Marin Organic Farm Project* participated in stakeholders meeting.) The basic concept for the exhibit is to be developed as a self-contained structure, consisting of multiple related components, suitable for temporary outdoor settings, adaptable for several scales of community event and schools, and designed to engage an audience of families and children about their place in the food system. The target audience might focus on school-aged children, particularly from underserved areas and for middle/high school students who have fewer opportunities to visit a site due to school scheduling constraints.

Youth and Adult Wellness

Marin, like the rest of the nation, is working to find solutions to combat obesity in the county. Studies indicate that even high income communities such as Marin are posting overweight figures that correspond with national trends. Overweight and obesity in children and adults has tripled in the last ten years and now includes one in every three children in Marin ages 2 – 17.

Over the past ten years, the *Healthy Marin Partnership* has conducted several community needs assessments. One of the key areas of need as identified in the *2005 Pathways to Progress Report* is to combat obesity in Marin. As reported in the assessment plan, the following factors have contributed to the spread of obesity:

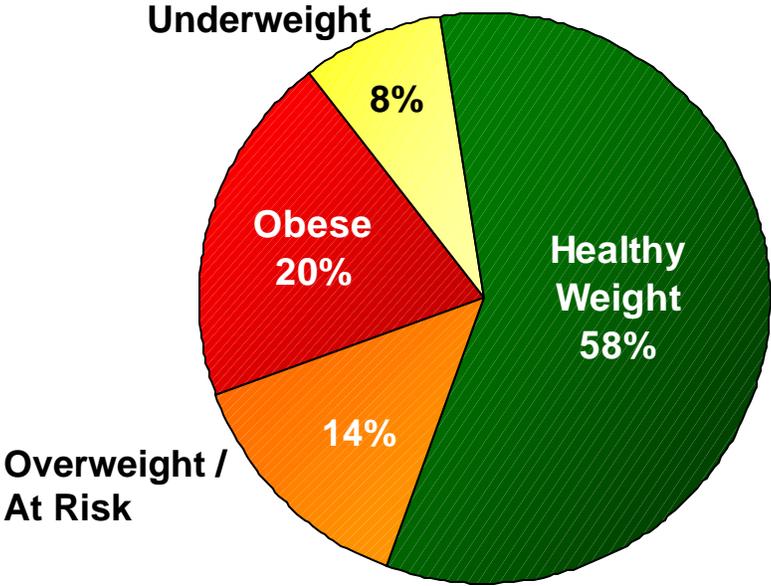
- School environments do not routinely encourage healthy foods. Only a handful of Marin schools have nutrition and food policies.
- Limited access to healthy, affordable, quality foods results in low daily consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, and high consumption of high-calorie, low nutrient food, including sodas and fast foods. Many areas of Marin do not have easy access to health foods.

An organic farm that featured opportunities to learn about food sources is one method of promoting awareness and education. Programs Like the Hansen Center's *Farm-to-School Program* that provides salad bars to 25 elementary schools in the Ventura area is an example of a proactive community effort. The *Marin Food Systems Project*, *Marin Organic* and the *Good Earth* store are all local programs that have begun working towards this goal.

The *2005 Pathways to Progress Report* recommends a number of strategies to help reduce overweight and obesity that an education farm could help promote. These include:

- Educating Providers
- Mobilizing Neighborhoods and Communities
- Promoting Community Education
- Fostering Coalitions and Networks
- Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills

Chart of Overweight/At Risk or Obese Marin Children, 2001



34% of Marin County children ages 2 – 17 are Overweight/At Risk or Obese*
24% of boys are obese, compared to 17% of girls

*2001 Marin Community Health Survey
(Information provided by the Marin Department of Health and Human Services – Nutrition Wellness Program)

Teacher and Community Supporters , May 2004

The Project will: ••promote middle & high school environmental education, healthy & sustainable living; ••integrate on-site organically grown food into school lunch programs; ••provide a public garden facility for Marin residents of all ages; ••create awareness of food sources in the county; ••provide summer institute for teacher training for project-based curriculum; ••provide location for retail produce for Marin farmers; ••promote knowledge of renewable energy sources and 'green' building options; •• promote the garden experience for Marin residents and schools through community garden plots; ••promote farming and its related industries; ••create a student-run summer kitchen/café enterprise; ••develop meaningful internships for high school students.

Sharon Adams	Paul daSilva*	Rich Illingworth	Meredith McCarty	Diana Redmond	Brad Vance
Martha Allen	Ruben daSilva*	Joan Jacobson	Karen McCloskey	Richard Redmond	Patti Vance*
Maria Allis	Grant Davis	Shannon Jamieson	Brook McCormick	Linda Richards	Vivienne Verdon-Roe
Dan Allis	Bob Davisson	MaryJane Jones*	Deborah McCrea*	Elizabeth Rintoul	Goolcher Wadia
Pia Anderson	Dana Delaney	Betty Jordan*	Barbara McCune*	Janet Rizzi	David Warner
Christin Anderson*	Paula Delehanty	Margaret Kadoyama	William McKinley	Sally Robert	Jean Warner
Velvy Appleton	Rowena Demayo	Gary Kaplan	Wendy McLaughlin	Jim Robertson	Suzanne Warner
Kit Argilla	Steve Desten	Brad Katuna*	Karen Meadows*	Kathy Robertson	Peter Warshall
Carola Ashford	Tricia Desten	Cheryll Keast	Linda Meier	Laura Rosenberg	Steven Wasserman
Jo Ashmore	Roberta Dossick*	Norma Keating	John Mergendoller*	Tahia Rosenthal-Cox*	Jay Weill
Kelly Ayers*	Andy Dreitcer	Tom Keating	Mike Mesker	Adrienne Roth	Linda Weill
Alice Bartholomew*	Charley Ehmann*	Jacqueline Kellam	Sherry Mesker	Gary Roth	Peter Weinstein
Pam Baskin	Maureen, Eric & Zoe Dixon	Carol Keyes	Kristin Meuser	Andy Ryan	Catherine Welter*
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Vickie Bassing	DB Finnegan	Mindy King*	Merte Milk-Martin	Cathy Sarkisian*	Jane Williams
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Jeff Baumsteiger	Kathie Fischer	Matthew Kramer	Rod Milstead*	Jeannie Shaw*	Audrey Zavell
Janelle Baumsteiger	Deborah Fleischer	Allison Krivoruchko	Ricardo Moncrief	Judy Shobar	Douglas Zucker
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Cathy Bedilion	Sharayn Forkel	Alex Krivoruchko	Liz Montague*		* Marin educator
Sheila Bennett-Newton*	Dave Forkel	Patty Kuehn	Julie Morris		
Ingrid Bergout	Linda Fowler	Steve Kuever*			
John Berry*	Betsy Fox				
Ismaila Biaye*	Sue Fox*				
Alice Bingaman*	Alan Freedman	* Marin educator			Jack Sims*
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Ann Cohen	Millie Heim*	Danielle Machotka	Ellin Purdom		Dave Tepper*
Kay Coleman	Stephenie Hendricks	Peggy Maclise	Ned Purdom		Jennifer Terry*
Kate Ames Comings	Kelly Hendricks	Scott Maclise	Lila Purinton		Ace Thelin
Barbara Comnes	Ruth Hicks	Nancy Malcolm*	Steve Quirt		Jasper Thelin*
Celia Como*	Megan Holbrook	Laurie Mardone	Cooper Raphael		Debbie Thompson
Terrie Crotti*	Levi Hooks*	Jesse Martin	Sally Regan*		Will Thoms
Suzanne d'Coney	Josh Horowitz*	John Martin*	Dave Reid*		Donna Tranchina*
	Amity Hotchkiss*	Diane Matthew	Danica Remy		Dave Troup
	Whitney Hoyt*	Alan Mayer	MaryJo Rice		
		Peggy McAllister	Jim Rice*		

Marin Education (Demonstration) Farm & Garden Feasibility Study Scope of Work Narrative

Project Goal: This study will determine the feasibility and required investment to develop a viable educational farm and garden facility in Marin County. The purpose of the study is to give interested community members and decision makers relevant information about two to three possible viable alternative programs and sites for an education farm and garden facility. The study report will provide two/three possible education program designs, a prioritized list of two/three possible facility sites; outline two/three administrative and operational models based on survey of related organizations, provide possible income and fee structures, and include recommendations for implementation.

Background: The Countywide Plan revision currently in public hearings clearly states that an agriculturally literate population that actively supports local agriculture is essential to the future of Marin agriculture, as well as to the creation of a sustainable local food system. Currently, there are very few educational opportunities for either youth or adults to learn about agriculture, the relationship between agriculture and the environment or the importance of local family farms to our community and our health. A trend towards overweight and obesity is an additional cause to re-educate ourselves on the importance of cooking and eating healthy foods.

Over the past 20 years many individuals and groups have dreamed about a site where they could share and deepen the public's awareness of and appreciation for our natural and agricultural landscapes that produce the food we consume. The future health of our environment, our communities, and our bodies will depend on a healthy ecosystem with healthy farms that produce environmentally and economically sustainable products for Marin and the Bay Area. Marin family farms and natural resources will only survive with the support of an agriculturally and environmentally literate public. Therefore, teacher training and education for students and adults are vital components needed to build a community that can work together to create and support a sustainable food system.

Agriculture links us to soil, weather, water, the land, and the unique cultural history of Marin County. Agricultural literacy incorporates an understanding of natural systems that govern ecosystems and is essential for a sustainable future. A blending of the education farm with a garden facility will attract and benefit Marin residents of all ages.

The Marin Agriculture & Education Alliance (MAEA) is a coalition of ten Marin agencies, formed in 1998, to promote agricultural literacy and a sustainable food system in Marin. MAEA has been training teachers about local agriculture for the past five years and provides farm field trips for schools in Marin and the Bay Area. The Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT) acts as fiscal agent for MAEA.

Study Funding: Funding is provided by the Marin Board of Supervisors (\$20,000), the Marin Community Foundation (\$20,000), the Buck Institute for Education (\$10,000) and LucasFilmLtd. (\$500).

Products: The contractor(s) working with the steering committee will produce a written report to be made available at the project completion. The report will be made available online in a pdf format, and a limited number in print form. The report will be presented in a multi-media format (including visuals of potential sites/related existing sites) to the steering committee and VIP advisory committee.

The feasibility report will include:

1. A detailed study that provides two/three possible scenarios for an education farm that includes and incorporates pre-determined site and program criteria:
 - a. educational program alternatives including possible administrative structures
 - b. comparative projection of one-time capital costs and a list of potential funding sources for both capital and ongoing expenses

- c. comparative on-going costs/income generated and exploration of financing one-time capital costs
 - d. a map of possible viable facility sites
 - e. non-economic information discovered during the study process such as information regarding other educational farms/sites, community scoping session and VIP advisory committee feedback, potential agricultural support services, education delivery systems and a listing of potential public benefits;
 - f. A working time line for each option
2. The results from community scoping sessions conducted with invited community participants that will include target groups such as educators, business and under-served populations to be determined jointly with VIP advisory committee and steering committee. Timeline: March, 2005
 3. The documented direction and feedback provided by a VIP advisory committee that will meet at least 2-3 times over the life of project to guide the planning process. Timeline: January, April, July, 2005.

Project methodology: The study contract will be carried out by an independent contractor(s) with related experience and expertise. The steering committee will coordinate the project along with the oversight of the VIP advisory committee. MALT Education Director Constance Washburn will oversee contractor(s) and the steering committee. Patti Vance will serve as the project manager and will be responsible for coordinating day-to-day logistics. The steering committee consists of: Cindy Pomi, Leah Smith, Sandy Wallenstein, Constance Washburn, Ellie Rilla and Patti Vance.

Project expenses:

MALT on behalf of MAEA (as part of this grant), will pay for the following related project costs: room rental, facilitation, and food expenses for the VIP advisory committee and community scoping sessions; and report print costs.

Project contractor(s) will bill for monthly study tasks and travel expenses, and will deliver 5 CD copies of final feasibility report in Word format including all relevant maps, graphic and photographic illustrations that support site/model descriptions and community and VIP committee scoping session documentation.

Timeline: This project will be short-term and intensive. The VIP advisory committee will meet in January, 2005 in a scoping session with the steering committee and contractors/consultants; progress reports due in early spring of 2005 with the final report due in December, 2005. All the work required by this study shall be completed and ready for acceptance no later than December 2005.

Summary of Scope of Work

Task A: Background Research

- Steering committee to develop criteria and modify questionnaire to use in survey/study of educational farm programs/gardens in Northern California and beyond. Timeline: Oct. – Nov. 2004.
- Budget for study is finalized; contractors and consultants hired. Timeline: Dec. – January, 2005.
- Selection and invitation of Advisory committee. Education Farm Advisory committee will be formed which will include the MAEA steering committee, representatives from the educational, environmental, agricultural, and funding communities as well as county government. Steering committee to organize several Advisory meetings. Timeline: January, 2005, June, 2005.
- Monthly activity report to steering committee by study consultants and project manager detailing progress on product outcomes. Timeline: monthly, 2005.

- Steering committee, consultants and community members study or visit Bay Area education farms and gardens to gather information on models and organizational structures to use for Marin project. Timeline: October – June, 2005.
- Collection and presentation of MAEA Coordination Project (MAEC) information on the current and future status of agriculture education in Marin and Bay Area. Timeline: Jan. – April, 2005.
- Research possible administrative structures for a Marin education farm that includes pros and cons for each option. Structures to consider: a private non-profit model, an existing public school; charter school; private/public partnership; for-profit business; single or multiple sites. Timeline: January – June, 2005.
- Research public/non-profit garden facilities to determine usage, costs, maintenance, revenue generated and horticultural focus. Timeline: October – May, 2005.
- MAEC information and additional research used to design several proposals for an educational farm program. Given the need, determine what programs should be offered. Proposals will address: grade levels, curriculum, outcomes, frequency, residential options and animal/plant cultivation. Timeline: November – June, 2005.
- Funding/business models will be researched to include: potential income sources for the project based on different types of structures; foundations; public donations; fees; sales revenue; government grants; school district contributions; rental income; food sales; tax revenues.
- Timeline: December – June, 2005.

Task B: Site Research

Site investigation: Consultant will research sites available in Marin to establish the suitability for an education farm/garden facility. Potential sites will be rated using a designated four-point rubric that addresses the following criteria: Timeline: Jan.-March, 2005

- LOCATION – The proposed site is centrally located in Marin with easy access for schools and the community at large. The land is near the 101 highway corridor and can be reached via existing streets or roads.
- AGRICULTURAL VIABILITY – The land is level and is agriculturally suitable for an education farm. Soil testing indicates a fertility that is compatible with the needs of the project.
- WATER – Agriculture can be sustained through a variety of water sources. The site has access to a MMWD connection and there is potential for a well, holding pond or underground receptacle.
- SIZE – The site can accommodate the proposed program(s) under consideration. The parcel is approximately 5 to 15 acres in size.
- ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS – The need to conduct an environmental report for the location has been reviewed. A determination is made whether increased traffic will have an impact on the surrounding area.
- AVAILABILITY – The site has the potential to become an education farm. An approximate range in price for the land, if privately owned, has been established. If the land is publicly owned by a city or county entity, the project has the potential of moving through an approval process.
- COSTS – Infrastructure costs associated with the site – roadwork, drainage, etc. have been determined along with ongoing costs for the land.
- POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS – Within the existing community or on a county-wide basis, as applicable, there is a general willingness to house an education farm/garden program.

Task C: Community Involvement and Communication Plan

At facilitated meetings, the results of the land search, community scoping sessions and other studies conducted under task A (# 5 – 10) will be presented to the steering committee, advisory committee, community and other interested parties. Community groups will include: MAEA, educators, farmers and underserved populations.

Timeline: Jan. – December, 2005.

- Develop a community involvement and communication plan that includes community scoping sessions, facilitated advisory committee meetings and press releases to the general public.
- Identify stakeholder groups and conduct community scoping sessions. Jan 05- March 05
- The land search report will be made to steering/advisory committees and interested community members. Options are discussed, input received, and a decision is made to further study X number of sites. Timeline: April, 2005.
- A presentation of options as listed in task A, # 5 – 10, will be presented to steering/advisory committees and interested community members. Timeline: July, 2005.
- A final report and recommendations are made to steering/advisory committees, county personnel, funding organizations and the public. December, 2005.

TASK D. Alternatives Development

The project team will conduct the following additional research on the X number of options selected by the education farm steering committee with county and community input. Timeline: April – May, 2005.

- EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT DESIGN: Determine the target of students the program will reach, curriculum integration and student outcomes. Additionally, study options for community participation at the site.
- GOVERNANCE/ADMINISTRATION/ STAFFING – Develop a plan for how the facility would be managed, governed and staffed.
- CAPITAL AND CONSTRUCTIONS COSTS – Determine approximate start-up expenses that include land, building, plant purchases and infrastructure costs.
- OPERATING COSTS – Establish a yearly operating budget for the education farm/garden.
- FUNDING/BUSINESS MODELS – Determine potential income sources for both capital and operating expenses. Consultant(s) will consider revenue from foundations, public donations, memberships, fees, sales revenue, grants, school districts, rental income, food sales and tax revenues.

TASK E: Presentation Of Options

At a facilitated meeting, present a report to the advisory committee, the county and the Marin community on the findings of the feasibility study. Get feedback from the community on the options presented. The project team will produce a written report to be made available at the project completion. The report will be made available online in a pdf format, and a limited number in print form. The report will be presented in a multi-media format (including visuals of potential sites/related existing sites) to the steering committee and VIP advisory committee. Timeline: July, 2005.

TASK F: Final review and adoption

Tabulate public feed back on the education farm and garden options. Present a final report and provide recommendations to joint steering committee, VIP advisory committee, county government, funding organizations and the public. Timeline: July – December, 2005.

Key Relationships: The following persons have been or will be consulted in the design of this project, and will be asked to serve on the VIP advisory committee:

Bob Berner, Marin Agricultural Land Trust
Warren Weber, MALT Bd. & MO Bd.
Sam Dolcini, Marin County Farm Bureau
Mary Jane Burke, Superintendent of Schools
Gary Giacomini, MCF Board of Trustees
Kathleen Bean, Marin Organic Bd.
Helge Hellberg, Marin Organic Exec. Director
Janet Brown, Center for Ecoliteracy
Stacy Carlsen, Marin Agricultural Commiss.
Sallyanne Wilson, Community member
Phyllis Faber, Environmental Forum
Chris Kelley, The Conservation Fund
Albert Straus, Straus Family Creamery
John Mergendoller, Buck Institute for Education

Steve Kinsey, County Supervisor
Susan Adams, County Supervisor
Larry Meredith, County Health & Human Ser.
Bob Giacomini, Dairy Operator
Hank Corda, Rancher, Vineyard Own. MCRCO
Rebecca Anderson-Jones
Linda Armstrong, County Health & Human Services
Jennifer Johnson, Marin Community Foundation
Sandy Neumann, Educator
Henry Grossi, Marin Farm Bureau

The Budget:

Budget	Total	Amounts Requested	Totals
Consultants fees	\$40,500	County of Marin	\$20,000
Reports Printing	\$4,000	Marin Community Foundation	\$20,000
Room rental/food	\$2,000	Buck Institute for Education	\$10,000
Travel	\$1,000	LucasfilmLtd.	\$500
Project Overhead	\$3,000		
<i>Total Study Cost</i>	<i>\$50,500</i>	<i>Total Income</i>	<i>\$50,500</i>

Existing documentation: There is a previous study entitled “Agricultural Education Feasibility at Walker Creek Ranch” produced in 1994 that could be used as a source document. There is documented community interest in the idea of an educational farm and garden facility as proposed by Patti Vance at the Tamalpais High School District property in the San Geronimo Valley that could guide the report. The project will draw on the Martin Luther King Edible Schoolyard study and information supplied by Irina Skokries of New College There are also several bay area educational farm and garden sites that will be used as viable examples.

Community benefits: Completion of this project will strengthen the viability of agriculture in Marin County by developing broad community awareness and support for educational programming, which promotes agricultural literacy. This project will assist the community planning process by providing a range of feasible agricultural operations in Marin County that could act as an educational resource for the county and the Bay Area. Additionally, the blending of an education farm with a garden facility will attract and benefit Marin residents of all ages.

Marin Farm & Garden Project Site Study Questionnaire

I. Site particulars

1. *What is the complete farm/garden name?*
2. *What is the street address?*
3. *What is the mailing address, phone & fax number?*
4. *Do you have a website – if so, what is the address?*
5. *What is your name & title?*
6. *Can you be reached by email? If so, what is your address?*

II. Program overview

7. *How many years has your program been established?*
8. *Briefly, what led to the creation of this program?*
9. *What is the mission statement or goal for the program?*
10. *In your opinion, what is the greatest learning opportunity provided by this program?*
11. *What is the greatest obstacle to this program's success?*
12. *How do you market your program?*

III. Clientele description/demographics/populations served

13. *What age groups do you serve?*
14. *If you offer a school program, what grade levels do you target?*
15. *Do you target or serve any special populations?*
16. *What are they?*
17. *How many people do you serve each year?*
18. *What geographic area do you serve?*
19. *How do you manage transportation and access?*
20. *How is the community involved at the site? Do you sponsor annual events?*
21. *How does the community benefit from your program?*

IV. Facilities

22. *How many acres at your facility?*
23. *Is any land under cultivation? How many acres?*
24. *What is grown?*
25. *Where does the harvested food go?*
26. *What kinds of animals do you have?*
27. *How many buildings do you have?*
28. *Are there any designated education or classroom-type facilities?*
29. *Do you have any residential buildings?*
30. *Are your residential buildings for staff or for program participants?*
31. *How many people can you accommodate?*
32. *How many people can you provide meal service for?*
33. *What farm-related buildings do you have?*
34. *What are your water sources for the site?*

V. Program details

35. *Do you provide a standard program for a visiting group? What do you offer?*
36. *How long is an average visit for a program participant?*
37. *Where does your teaching take place?*
38. *Is there a written/printed curriculum? Is it based on Calif. Content standards?*
39. *Are there pre- or post-visit activities?*
40. *Is there any follow-up or testing?*
41. *How does your program address nutrition and obesity issues?*
42. *Are there any ties to science, social studies or language arts frameworks?*
43. *Are there any areas of particular program emphasis such as animals, plants, or environmental education?*

VI. Program management

44. *How many staff members manage your program?*
45. *How are decisions made?*
46. *How many volunteers/docents are involved at your site?*
47. *Do you offer a formal training program for volunteers?*
48. *If yes, how long?*

VII. Administration/budget

49. *Do you have an administrative staff?*
50. *Do you have a board of directors, and if so, what is their function?*
51. *What are the sources for your program funding, by approximate percentage? (fees, grants, etc.)*
52. *How much do you charge for your programs, per person or per group?*
53. *Do you have a non-profit organization designation?*
54. *Do you have annual memberships and if so, how many each year?*
55. *What are your annual water costs?*
56. *What are your annual insurance costs?*
57. *Approximately, what is your overall total budget?*

VII. Evaluation

58. *What techniques or methods do you use to measure whether your program is a success?*
59. *What are the two or three main factors that make your program work?*
60. *What are your future plans or goals?*
61. *What advice do you have for us?*
62. *Can you suggest any other sites or exemplary programs?*
63. *Can you share an example that illustrates how your program has truly made a difference?*

Marin Education Farm and Garden Project
Student Focus Group
October, 2004, at the Green Gulch Organic Farm

Thirteen seniors from the *Studies of the Environment Academy* at Drake High School participated in a discussion and survey on the idea of creating an education farm in Marin County. About half the students included their names on their surveys and would be interested in participating in a future community forum to discuss the viability of an education farm in Marin

1. What are the two or three most important lessons students can learn from an education farm?

- Because of the current issues with nutrition & the politics of food production, I think it's most important for students to understand how much work goes into growing food. I also think that it's important to learn how to grow your own food, as this skill is one of the most timeless & vital skills a human can have.
- How to live our lives in a sustainable and responsible way; how to raise and maintain living things. (IM)
- That food is created, it doesn't just appear; that we can sustain ourselves. (ZR)
- Fundamentals of organic farming (soil/plant, health, biodiversity, water conservation, growing plants) eating healthy, getting back to the earth. (EF)
- Our connection to the environment; an awareness of how hard farming life is & how much work actually goes into food; healthy eating. (EM)
- Sustainability □ what society's needs are □ what do we need to do through our actions to sustain the future.
- Learn how our food is actually grown, learn about eating healthier, learn about enhancing/sustaining soil & the environment.
- Healthy personal diet; safe farming for environment.
- Organic farming techniques; respect of the land.
- Intensive work; a peaceful place to be.
- Learn the importance of good healthy food □ sets an example for other schools to do the same; people start to understand what goes into their food.
- Healthy eating; responsibility; sustainability in agriculture. (BL)
- Health of yourself + the health of the earth; how you can keep it healthy.

2. What is the value of supporting an organic farm project?

- If you want to reach out to your community, supporting a project like this would be endlessly important. Not only would you be helping students understand the food production process, but you'd be encouraging good eating habits.
- Basically it is spreading the right message about our values; How it will build community; it will make people healthier; get students outdoors doing a different type of work (EM)
- Could help educate children to grow up healthier and improve quality of local food & life.
- Teaching students about organic farming will give them a better understanding of where their food comes from as well as an appreciation of ecological harmony. It is vital for students to reconnect with our earth; to feel the soil crumble between their fingers and taste the sweet rewards of their labor. (EF)
- I think most importantly it will support local sustainability which is becoming increasingly important.

- Incredible education tool – students not in SEA DISC don't learn about this stuff. It would further beautify our already stunning county. Community meeting place. (BL)
- Teaches students about health; where their food comes from, not just the supermarket. EU
- Improve the food quality in schools, encourage healthier diets, spreading awareness of organic farming methods.
- Instill healthy eating habits in kids.
- Extremely important to support education, work experience, healthy eating and helping the environment. (ZR)
- It creates an interesting and very real learning environment for students. (IM)
- Student's learning □ hands on learning; awareness of where our food comes from; healthy quality food for students plus school weaned from corporate food – Kraft, etc.

3. *What has been the most valuable aspect of the visit to the Green Gulch farm today?*

- After today, I've decided to go home & start a garden at my house. The trip inspired me to figure out how to grow my own food & be more natural.
- The community that works together to create a sustainable agricultural system while serving both human and the environment (BL)
- To see the extreme, amazing things you can do w/ organic farming and become more sustainable.
- The energy of the place
- The interconnectedness of Buddhist principles & organic farming. (EU)
- Seeing permaculture in action has been so inspiring. I feel like this small farm could become the way everyone gets their food in the future. (EF)
- Seeing the plants and apples.
- To see an effective, beautiful organic garden that has a variety of plants and growing methods.
- Providing a high yield of crops & pleasing environment through intertwining of plants & intensive farming.
- How farmers use space to their advantage.
- Seeing how a community can be responsible and self-sufficient for every aspect of their everyday life.
- Seeing the variety of gardening techniques.
- Seeing the huge variety of plants (almost all edible) that are able to grow together so successfully and the community of people working and living here.

4. *If you had an internship on an organic farm, what would you be most interested in pursuing? (1st to 4th choice).*

Hands-on planting, maintenance and harvesting of food.

Responses 2, 3, 1, 4, 1, 1, 3, 1, 1, 4, 1, 1, 2 = $25 \div 13 = 1.92$

Outreach to middle or elementary schools about locally produced food and sustainable living. responses

3, 4, 3, 4, 4, 2, 4, 3, 3, 1, 2 = $33 \div 11 = 3.00$

Coordinating events and farmers for marketing food to schools and the public.

Responses 4, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 3, 1, 4, 4, 4 = $34 \div 11 = 3.09$

Learning to prepare organic food; participate in summer café enterprise for the public.

Responses 1, 1, 1, 2, 2, 1, 2, 2, 3, 3 = $20 \div 11 = 1.81$

Recommendations – Possible Sites & Programs

Public access and transportation are two challenges for developing an education farm in Marin. Identifying a site is equally challenging in that few affordable parcels exist in the city-centered corridor. As part of a comprehensive long-term county plan for advancing agricultural literacy and support for local farms, regional programs would be promoted in each of the four areas (Southern, Central, Northern and West Marin). Each region has existing programs or future plans for expansion that addresses many of the goals of the proposed *Education Farm and Garden Project*.

As mentioned in the beginning of the report, a significant finding of the feasibility study was the need for existing Marin organizations to improve communications and work together. MAEA is a loosely formed consortium of agencies that helps promote sustainable agriculture and education programs in the county. Coordination efforts in the past have relied on volunteers from the consortium since there is no formal administrator, office or organizational structure to promote the group's work.

To be most effective, the network of sites and education programs would benefit from a formally established clearing house to assist in sharing resources, coordinating services and leveraging funding opportunities. The *Marin Farmers Market* and the *Environmental Education Council of Marin*, both non-profit organizations, have offered to serve as an umbrella entity for MAEA but without funding for staff and daily operations, these coordinating services would be difficult.

Central Location in Marin

In San Rafael, there were several potential sites that were considered for the education farm project. They include St. Vincent's School for Boys and the Civic Center. The Silviera farm and land near the Las Gallinas Sanitary District were investigated but were not considered viable options.

St. Vincent's School for Boys - Several meetings took place with the director of the land use program. The director and the St. Vincent's land committee all feel the farm project is well aligned with the school's vision for land use and that residents of St Vincent's and the general public could benefit from this project. The school sees the possibility of making a site available northeast of the railroad tracks for agricultural use. A soccer field has also been suggested for the site. There is some controversy on the use of the land east of the railroad tracks and this needs to be settled before committing to this site.

It was clear that St. Vincent's needs to generate revenue from the land to continue supporting the school's mission and a lease for an organic farm would need to provide ongoing revenue. There was concern that this project not jeopardize St. Vincent's future development purposes west of the railroad tracks. A proposed organic farm project could not move forward until the whole land use package for St. Vincent's received county approval. The organic farm project would be expected to actively participate in the political process for land use approval. For the immediate future, the feasibility study does not see this as a viable option.

San Rafael Civic Center - Two parcels of county land in San Rafael are currently being considered for a future Marin Farmers Market Pavilion. They include: 1) land adjacent and east of highway 101 presently used for overflow event parking and a holiday tree lot and 2) approximately 2 -3 acres of land behind the exhibition hall also referred to as "the back 40". The future pavilion will most likely be built on one of these two sites. (A third site near Macys at Northgate is also being considered.)

As part of the Farmer's Market Master Plan, land would be set aside for an education farm that would include an orchard and teaching gardens. If the two sites mentioned above were developed jointly for a pavilion and farm, a comprehensive education program for students and residents could be developed either by the Market or contracted

through an existing Marin program. The feasibility study sees this option as the most viable for a city-centered organic educational farm.

The feasibility of creating an education farm in the city-centered corridor has the greatest potential at the San Rafael Civic Center. Should the future Farmers Market Pavilion be located within the exhibition hall area, an organic farm could be placed within walking distance of the market. As a central location with public transportation service, this site would be beneficial for students attending summer programs and is reachable within 20 minutes from most population-based towns and cities in Marin.

Site Considerations – San Rafael Civic Center

- Site is located in the city-centered corridor and is accessible via public transportation.
- Land is county-owned. Lease option more attractive than land purchase elsewhere.
- Water sources exist on the site.
- Ample parking is available in adjacent exhibition hall lots.
- Traffic pattern does not compromise residential neighborhoods.
- Creeks near the site would provide environmental restoration opportunities for school programs.
- Minimal construction would be needed to support the project. The Farmers Market Master Plan includes classroom space that could be shared with the farm project.
- The proposed Pavilion will be constructed as a ‘green’ building – an identified criteria for the Farm and Garden Project.

Administration & Operations

- The *Marin Center for Sustainable Agriculture* (Marin Farmers Pavilion) is a 501(c)3 non-profit that could serve as the umbrella organization for an organic farm project.
- The farm management and education program would be a division of the *Farmers Market Pavilion* or operated independently by one of the county agricultural education programs already in existence.
- The education farm and its mission would be supported by agricultural and environmental organizations of Marin. An existing board of directors for the Farmers Market includes representation from farmers and the agriculture community, business leaders and health/nutrition experts.
- Operational cost considerations: see Financial Analysis Report.

Existing Sites and Networking Possibilities

Southern Marin

Existing Sites - Green Gulch Zen Center, Slide Ranch, Headlands Institute

Each of the organizations listed above are in the process of program expansions and have the capacity to incorporate many of the recommendations from the farm and garden feasibility study. Slide Ranch is studying how its program can expand to offer a wider spectrum of services through potential partnerships with farm operations in the area. Slide would also like to expand opportunities for older students and adults. Green Gulch presently offers training and classes for students and the public and are re-evaluating the overall education program. The Headlands is expanding its program to include multicultural marine curriculum and resources targeting underserved students in the Bay Area.

Central Marin

Existing Sites - The College of Marin (Kentfield), the Marin Farmers Market, Marin Art and Garden Center.
Programs - The Environmental Education Council of Marin, Marin Conservation Corps, The Marin Food Systems Project, SEED

The College of Marin (COM) has developed a proposal to establish a *Center for Sustainability and Health* that includes an organic garden at the Kentfield site, (groundbreaking has taken place) and plans for a future education farm at the Indian Valley Campus (IVC). The program will provide classes to its students and the community at large in food production, wise energy and irrigation use and the integration of gardening and wellness. The college

is seeking input and community partnerships that will further these efforts. Current partnerships include the UC Master Gardeners, the Marin Art and Garden Center and the Marin Municipal Water District.

In addition, the college is proposing the construction of a new building at the Indian Valley campus that promotes sustainability. The *Center for Regenerative Design* will address ten systems: energy, water, built environment, material resources, waste disposal, food, land use, transportation, health and well-being, academics and culture, and community. A facilities bond measure was recently approved by voters that will provide funding for this project.

Northern Marin

Sites - College of Marin, Indian Valley

Service Programs - Marin Conservation Corps, UC Cooperative Extension, The Farm Bureau, SEED

In the proposal for the *Center for Sustainability and Health*, the College of Marin would become a county leader in establishing programs that promote urban gardening and farming, local food production and wellness and fitness. The garden activities at the Kentfield campus would be expanded in a second phase to include an educational farm at the 300-acre Indian Valley Campus (IVC). The college is interested in developing a program that meets the needs of its students and the community at large. Working with the college in promoting high school and post-secondary opportunities is one of the principal needs identified in the feasibility study.

Site Considerations – Indian Valley College

- Site is located in the northern corridor and is accessible via public transportation.
- Land is owned by the college. The 300-acre site has potential to accommodate an education farm.
- Water sources exist on the site.
- Ample parking is available in adjacent student parking lots.
- Existing classroom facilities would accommodate visiting groups and classes.

West Marin

Sites - Permaculture Institute of Northern California (Commonweal Gardens), Devils Gulch Ranch , Windrush Farm, Walker Creek Ranch, Slide Ranch, Point Reyes National Seashore and Individual Ranchers and Farmers
Service Programs - Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT), Marin Organic

All of the programs listed in West Marin have seen a substantial spike in demand for agricultural services and educational opportunities. The Permaculture Institute of Northern California has expanded class offerings that promote sustainable technologies and methodologies such as the “4 Seasons” Permaculture training and the Regenerative Design & Nature Awareness training. Slide Ranch is studying how its program can expand to offer a wider spectrum of services through potential partnerships with farm operations in the area.

MALT is expanding opportunities for schools and the public through the Marin Farm Field Studies Program which visits working farm sites such as Devil’s Gulch and Windrush Farms. Individual farmers in West Marin such as Kevin Lunny in the Point Reyes National Seashore and the Poncia’s in Tomales are interested in creating educational opportunities for the public to visit their farms. Marin Organic and the Marin Food Systems Project are working to expand the organic school lunch program, the school garden curriculum, gleaning opportunities and nutrition education in order to reach greater number of schools, teachers and families.