7-29-2009

Interview with Sarah Patterson, Lettuce Grow Garden Foundation, 2009 (audio)

Sarah Patterson

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Part one
Introduction information

0:09 What can you tell me about the Lettuce Grow Foundation?

Beginning- idea was started by an inmate that had taken a sustainability class at Portland State University

0:30 Food Fantasies being the inspiration for the idea
0:47 Kicking the can with the idea every 2 weeks
1:00 Foundations that Contributed
1:22 Coordinating with Coffee Creek Prison
1:30 August- September, Organic Farmers 5 year plan
2:05 Soliciting Security Badge volunteers
2:55 Supplies donated
3:37 Work assignment for inmates
3:50 Nutrition in the prison- kitchen staff serving 3000 meals a day
4:00 Adding inmates to the work assignment one at a time with the volunteers
4:45 Dynamic with the kitchen staff
5:40 Vocational Training
5:50 Certification
6:00 Nutritional Education
6:21 Her Phone Rings

Part 2

0:13 What the inmates can take back to their families
0:25 Organic Certification- Everything is grown Organic
1:15 Pause in Tape

1:31 What is your Definition of Sustainability
1:39 Sustainability is really 2 questions
   What are you teaching?
   Can you maintain it?
1:55 501 CB Certification- Fund Raising and Grant Writing Goals
2:26 Brought in wildlife to the prison that was never there before
2:45 Broaden the footprint of the Project
2:54 "Seed to Table"
   2 Volunteers teach the class with in the prison
   Teaching is done in the garden, not a class room
3:17 Security risks inside the prison
   4 inmates working the garden right now
   So many of the inmates don't have something to do
4:00 How Are those 4 chosen?
   They Apply for it
   Why stick only with minimum security inmates instead of medium
4:22 security inmates for the garden work?
   Be successful in the start
   operational issues
   expanding is a future goal, but security issues take priority
5:40 How much of the food is actually making it to the prison kitchen?
   Not much at this time
   Beginning of the harvest season
   Got started quickly and didn’t consult with the kitchen as to what they actually
   needed/wanted so what they were given was what WE thought they would
   need
6:34 Mark B. - Organic Farmer
   "If they were only growing Iceburg lettuce they would still be getting the
   education and skills"
7:00 What is planted?
   Lettuce, Beats and a list is on the website
   (In reference to Benefits of the Garden) What is the most important thing
7:22 your teaching them?
   Gardening skills, Chemistry of Organic Gardening
   Teamwork
   Management
   Interpersonal skills- many inmates have never had jobs
   Volenteers have played a major role,
8:14 The education- is it in the field or a Classroom?
   In the field, in the garden
   (Refering to the Volenters working with the inmates) Are there security
8:20 issues working side by side?
   No- they are greatful to have someone else to talk to.
8:55 Tools to bring in?
   Land was tilled for them
Staff does a lot of the work
20 yards of compost was donated
9:39 Failed previous growing project
    Had the tools and they were retained.
10:40 Donated Compost
    Outside sources
10:50 Nicolas Seed
11:05 Concentrates, seeds Donated from places in Portland
11:30 Compost from Fall Leaves
12:05 **Does the prison use a compost pile on it's own?**
    It's a goal to have the prison use a compost pile
    They had no recycling at one point
12:58 Compost Machine
    Earth Advantage
    So complicated that no one could run it
14:13 Sarah makes a reference to her housing building
    Composting took the garbage collection by Half
13:35 Getting the Machine up?
    Could be a staff of work program, but it's unclear yet
16:35 Future plans for partnerships
    Pheniox Rising, Mercy Corps, Tilth
**17:25 Have you talked to those who worked in the garden and gotten out?**
    No, it's only started in Feb.
    3 year or less sentences on the inmates, hopefully will stagger the release of people coming and going into the program.