

Urban Farming and Nutrition Education: Mill Creek Farm



Sara E King

EES 662

Richard Berman

The Demographics of Obesity

- Center for Disease Control: 33% of children born in the United States during 2005 would develop diabetes.
- 50% of African American children born in 2003
- West Philadelphia's schools, childhood obesity rates are nearing 20% (Netter center)



Mill Creek Farm: 4901 Brown St. Philadelphia PA

- Was once houses built on unstable fill
- Underground creek, houses demolished
- Vacant lot for 30 years
- PWD purchased from Redevelopment Authority for storm water retention
- Mill Creek Farm- grew out of Mill Creek Community Garden



BEFORE

(millcreekurbanfarm.com)

Mill Creek Farm

- 0.5 acres
- Crops: okra, greens, turnips, tomatoes, corn, red beets, sweet potatoes
- Stands open on Wed + Sat
- 47th and Baltimore cooperative



AFTER

(millcreekurbanfarm.com)

Mill Creek Farm: Access to fresh foods

- Crops: okra, greens, turnips, tomatoes, corn, red beets, sweet potatoes
- Produce Stands open on Wed + Sat
- Operate @ 47th and Baltimore cooperative
- A.L.T.O.E.- partnership w/ Netter Center
- Keep prices affordable



(millcreekurbanfarm.com)

Mill Creek Farm: Education

- Urban Farming & gardening classes
- Tours & field trips
- Sustainable design showcase: Farm Shed
 - composting toilet
 - solar electric
 - green roof
 - cobb construction
- Rain water catchments for irrigation



(millcreekurbanfarm.com)

Friends With Food Study, UK

- 4 low income female study groups
- Nutrition education:
 - visualizing fat in foods
 - using starches/root vegetables to extend meat dishes
- 10 sessions of "hands-on free" experimentation
- Modest but measureable change in food habits in half of participants
- Social preconceptions were a barrier to adoption

"I don't tend to do chips as much no more ... I'd say [the FWF programs] given me the confidence to experiment with different foods and that ... we never used to eat much rice before I never thought I'd be able to cook it right. People always said it's hard. Then I tried it [at FWF] and there was nothing to it."

Mill Creek Farm: Areas for Growth

- Increase familiarity with fresh produce
- “Hands on” instruction is most effective in affecting food habit changes
- Okra vs. Eggplant
- Possible AUNI/ Mill Creek Farm Partnership



(millcreekurbanfarm.com)

Resources:

Agaston Urban Nutrition Initiative.

<http://www.upenn.edu/ccp/programs/agatston-urban-nutrition-initiative.html>. 11/5/09.

Geringer, Dan. The little half-acre that could: Urban minifarms, like Mill Creek, are keeping many Philadelphians from going hungry. Philadelphia Daily News. 6.8.09

Kennedy, Lynne A., et al. 1998. Nutrition Education Program Based on EFNEP for Low-Income Women in the United Kingdom: "Friends With Food". Journal of Nutrition Education. Vol. 30, No. 2, pp 89-99.

Mill Creek Farm Annual Report. 2007. A Little Taste of Everything. Philadelphia, PA.

"About Us.". <http://www.millcreekurbanfarm.org/about.html>.11/5/09