

Coral Coast Hydroponics Farm

SUSTAINABLE FRESH GREENS FOR THE CNMI PSS



PROJECT SUMMARY

Coral Coast Foundation Corporation (CCFC) established a functional hydroponic farm to grow and serve hydroponic lettuce to reduce reliance on imports and provide the Public School System (PSS) with access to locally grown, sustainable, and nutritious produce.



\$20,000 FUNDED

from the Children's Healthy Living Food Systems pilot projects award.



2024 - 2025

Funding was utilized to support project implementation from March 2024 through February 2025.

BACKGROUND

Similar to other Pacific Islands, traditional diets in the NMI have been replaced by imported western foods, leading to harmful dietary changes and increased risk for chronic disease. According to the 2018 Agricultural Census, there are barely over 1,500 acres being actively farmed in the CNMI (USDA, 2020). Together, this reflects the underutilization of land for food production, which negatively impacts the food system, economy, and health of NMI residents. One example is the experiences of a PSS food service vendor, Kalayaan, Inc., which requires about 1,050 pounds of lettuce to supply its daily operations and about 3,550 pounds of lettuce for PSS. As such, there is a demonstrated need for fresh produce in the NMI, coupled with a surplus of farm land that is underutilized.



SOLUTION

CCFC consulted with local organizations such as the Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Services (NMC CREES). Discussions included seed germination, equipment use, and facility setup. Furthermore, CCFC collaborated with the PSS food service vendor Kalayaan, Inc., in assessing the lettuce required in its everyday operations. During the process, a survey was also distributed to the community, which aimed to explore the driving factors for the adoption of hydroponics and understand the current challenges faced. The results illustrated the state of hydroponics implementation, its potential impact on agriculture, and a foundation for making informed decisions and recommendations to further promote sustainable agricultural practices.

MEASURING IMPACT

Monitoring and evaluation activities were conducted to assess progress and impact, including insights into crop yield, nutrient efficiency, energy consumption costs, and overall project outcomes. Coral Coast plans to continue operations and enhancements to the hydroponics farm. They will continue working with partners, such as the Division of Agriculture and NMC CREES, to enhance production. Partnership has been critical for the farm in increasing growing capacity and addressing challenges.

REFERENCES

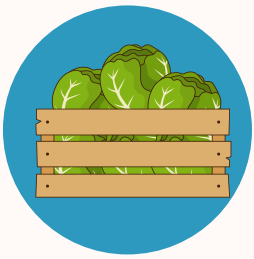
USDA. (2020). *USDA Releases 2018 Census of Agriculture Data for American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and U.S. Virgin Islands*. <https://www.nass.usda.gov/Newsroom/archive/2020/07-21-2020.php>

SUSTAINABLE FRESH GREENS FOR THE CNMI PSS



6 LETTUCE HARVESTS

Coral Coast Hydroponics Farm harvested lettuce from June 2024 through April 2025. Partners included the Division of Agriculture and Northern Marianas College - Cooperative Research, Extension and Education Services (CREES).



364 LBS DISTRIBUTED

Lettuce was harvested at the Coral Coast Hydroponics Farm and distributed to the Public School System for incorporation into school meals in partnership with the PSS Child Nutrition Program.



2,200 STUDENTS SERVED

Students at the Public School System were served the hydroponic lettuce via school lunches. CCFP partnered with PSS school meal vendor Kalayaan, Inc.

“This brings us significantly closer to fulfilling our overall objectives: improving food security, promoting sustainable agricultural practices, and making nutritious food more accessible within our community.”

- Coral Coast Foundation Corp.



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