



‘Growing in Confidence – A Community Food Project



Health Promotion and Public Health Departments
 HSE- West, Department of Food and Agriculture in partnership with The Organic Centre, Rossinver, Co Leitrim



Community Food Project



- Project now in its fourth year
- We have 6 Gardens across the North West
- Supported by HSE West, Department of Food and Agriculture

Background

- Since 2004, the Health Promotion Department of HSE West in partnership with the Organic Centre, Co Leitrim has supported active involvement to change patterns of food intake through a community food and gardening initiative
- In 2007, the Department of Food and Agriculture match funded the HSE contribution



Glor Na Mara, Bundoran



Project outline

- Six sites
 - 3 Urban based in Sligo/Donegal
 - 3 Rural based in Sligo/Leitrim
- Participants (approx 12 each site) recruited through variety of community and statutory contacts/ groups. Particularly focused towards those managing on tight budget
- Participants have included clients of disability services and asylum seekers



Project outline

- Hands-on experience with professional gardener
 - March – October
 - Sessions 2-3 hours once a week
 - Theory discussions and handouts included
 - Finish with harvest event / celebration
- Cookery classes provided by Eat Well Be Well tutors on 2 occasions throughout the course
- Participants get to harvest, take home, and use the produce that they help grow
- Project was again replicated successfully in 2007
- Project co-ordinated by multi-sectoral Steering group



Forthill Men's Group, Northside Community Centre, Sligo



Aims

- To increase knowledge, awareness and skills among target groups in relation to fruit and vegetable production, preparation and consumption and to promote positive health and well-being
- Linked to recommendations of Cardiovascular Disease strategy, Obesity Taskforce report and the National Health Strategy



Rathcormac, Co Sligo



Objectives

- Improve participants' knowledge skills in vegetable and fruit growing
- Enhance participants' skills in preparing and cooking fruit and vegetables
- Increase participants consumption of fruit and vegetables
- Increase participants knowledge of the nutritional value of fruit and vegetables
- Develop more positive attitudes towards consumption of fruit and vegetables
- Provide opportunities for physical activity outdoors
- Provide opportunities for positive social interaction and development



Sligo Folk Park, Riverstown , Co Sligo



Examples of Community Food Initiatives

- Community Gardens
- Training / Education programmes
- Food Co-ops
- Allotments
- Community Cafes
- School Initiatives
- Community Kitchens





Impact of diet on health

- Poor diet – risk factor for malnutrition, coronary health disease, cancer and diabetes
- Modern malnutrition is combination of obesity and imbalance of nutrients
- Poor diet is related to 30% of life years lost in early death and disability (WHO, 2002)





Food Poverty

- 'Inability to have an adequate and nutritious diet due to issues of affordability of and access to food' (Dowler, 1998)



At risk groups

- Low income households
- Lone parents
- Children and young people
- Older People
- Disabled People
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Ethnic groups
- Homeless communities
- Travellers



Benefits of fruit and vegetables



- Reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke and some cancers
- Increasing fruit and veg is 2nd most important cancer prevention strategy, after reducing smoking
- Can help reduce blood pressure
- Help achieve other dietary goals including increasing fibre intake, reducing fat intake, aiding weight management and substituting for high sugar foods



Benefits of Community Food Projects

- Environmental – *less waste, reduced food transportation*
- Economic
- Community Development - *regeneration*
- Educational
- Health – *physical activity, nutrition, mental health*



Community Food Project

•HSE Funding confirmed for 2008

•Waiting List for New Gardens in 2008

•How to Guide

•Local Planet

