

## **Press Release**

**For Immediate Release: Oct. 27, 2010**

### **Healthy Communities Coalition Awarded USDA Community Food Projects To Improve Food Security**

WASHINGTON, Oct. 27, 2010 – Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced 27 awards today to local organizations to build community food systems and fight hunger and food insecurity. These awards were made through USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). Among the 27 chosen were Healthy Communities Coalition of Lyon and Storey, a private nonprofit ([www.healthycomm.org](http://www.healthycomm.org) or [www.facebook.com/healthycommunitiescoalition](http://www.facebook.com/healthycommunitiescoalition))

"Fighting hunger and food insecurity in the United States is a top priority for the Obama administration," said Vilsack. "The Community Food Projects grants give low-income communities the tools and resources they need to become self-sufficient in meeting their food needs while also responding to the nutritional issues of the community."

The organizations receiving awards were selected through NIFA's Community Food Projects program. The current projects, totaling \$4.8 million in funding, will fund food policy council training, urban agriculture, new farmers on preservation farmland, promotion of native food sovereignty, youth, urban and rural food production projects and community food assessments. Community Food Projects have been funded in nearly 300 communities in 48 states during its 14-year history.

The primary goals of the Community Food Projects program are to (1) meet the food needs of low-income individuals; (2) increase the food self-reliance of low-income communities; (3) promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm and nutrition issues; and (4) meet specific state, local or neighborhood food and agricultural needs, including needs relating to infrastructure improvement and development, planning for long-term solutions and the creation of innovative marketing activities that mutually benefit agricultural producers and low-income consumers.

The goals of the funding are a perfect fit for the goals Healthy Communities Coalition members and partners had set over the last few years, including supporting communities in developing community and school gardens or living playgrounds, farmers' markets, micro-farms and backyard gardens. A focus on producing and selling fresh vegetables, herbs and fruits locally not only invigorates the local economy, it also teaches residents of all ages

practical and marketable gardening and business skills and improves nutrition and well being through more access to fresh vegetables and fruits.

Healthy Communities Coalition board, staff, task force and other community leaders from throughout the Lyon and Storey areas convened recently for a special session to discuss the Community Food Project goals, as well as other new sources of funding the Coalition has been awarded that will increase access to education for all ages, job skills training, preventative health care, and tobacco, alcohol and other drug abuse prevention and recovery.

Those attending the August special session included Lyon School District Superintendent Caroline McIntosh, Lyon School District Grants Manager Analinda Camacho, Lyon Sheriff Allen Veil, Lyon Council on Alcohol Director Ian Curley, Central Lyon Youth Connections Director Michele Watkins, Lyon Human Services Director Edrie LaVoie, JOIN Director Kathy McKnight, Fernley Children and Family Counseling's Jeff Davis, Community Chest Youth Development Coordinator Darren McKay, Central Lyon Youth Connection board member Donna Alexander, Healthy Communities' staff and regional task force leaders.

Through federal funding and leadership for research, education and extension programs, National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) focuses on investing in science and solving critical issues impacting people's daily lives and the nation's future.