



## What Core Competencies are Necessary for Facilitators Who Lead NYS Seed to Supper Programs?

Working with vulnerable populations requires a unique set of competencies – those skills, knowledge and abilities, as well as the “inner ground” necessary for working in community.

These facilitators will be the face of *NYS Seed to Supper* in the community and should be selected and prepared with these skills and experiences in mind, well beyond garden education. A facilitator doesn't just 'train' about gardening facts and isn't the seat of wisdom and knowledge – a facilitator is a guide to help people form relationships and community connections.

Please use this planning sheet to reflect on how you can build a robust team of facilitators to help guide the numerous activities that need to be considered as you build your *NYS Seed to Supper* program model. Although it may not be necessary for every facilitator to have each every competency, if you reflect on a team-based model, these competencies should be well represented across your team, and facilitators should be encouraged to collaborate with one another to ensure that the team has the competencies for personal readiness, engagement with the community, program design and implementation, and program evaluation.

### Personal Readiness

*Facilitators have the knowledge, skills and/or ability to:*

- A1. Understand how their viewpoints may impact and bias their work.
- A2. Work with a variety of people including those of a different race, gender or ability.
- A3. Identify environmental factors that can impact a person's growth and development.
- A4. Identify factors in a person that can affect his/her growth and development.
- A5. Understand how the availability of resources (social, financial and political) can affect a person's access to community support services. Barriers to program access in this case can include time to attend educational sessions; time to garden, prepare harvest; transportation to educational session; garden space resources and garden supplies; resources for child care; and concerns about public safety.
- A6. Identify the continued learning opportunities that they need.
- A7. Maintain a high level of professionalism and ethics in their work.
- A8. Recognize the developmental milestones of the low income families that they serve.
- A9. Recognize the predictors of risk behaviors among the low income families that they serve.
- A10. Understand the deeper issues of food insecurity and poverty.

### Engagement with the Community

*Facilitators have the knowledge, skills and/or ability to:*

- B1. Identify assets in the community.
- B2. Build relationships in the community.
- B3. Bring diverse stakeholders together to make complex decisions.
- B4. Assess community change readiness and help track change in the community over time.
- B5. Understand/appreciate cultural, religious, legal or other issues that may affect a program or the people it serves.
- B6. Access other programs in Cooperative Extension, and in the community, who are working with low income audiences, and build relationships with them.

## Program Design

*Facilitators have the knowledge, skills and/or ability to:*

- C1. Support active learning and skill building.
- C2. Create a safe and welcoming learning environment.
- C3. Build learner confidence and self-worth.
- C4. Adapt guidelines and expectations for different types of learners.
- C5. Plan for ongoing program success and sustainability.

## Program Implementation

*Facilitators have the knowledge, skills and/or ability to:*

- D1. Help develop supportive relationships among program participants.
- D2. Promote effective communication among program participants.
- D3. Use technology (video, social networking, and other tech tools) to improve program efficiency/effectiveness.
- D4. Help participants learn about community resources.
- D5. Manage the day-to-day basics of a Seed to Supper program.

## Program Evaluation

*Facilitators have the knowledge, skills and/or ability to:*

- E1. Describe a program using a logic model.
- E2. Understand the characteristics of a high quality program.
- E3. Understand why it is important to evaluate program **quality** and program **results**.
- E4. Understand how to evaluate program **outcomes**.
- E5. Understand how to evaluate program **quality**.

### *Adapted from: Summary of the CYFAR Core Competencies*

*Priority skill areas have been identified for each of the five CYFAR Core Competencies listed above, a program in which supervisors are encouraged to work individually with their CYFAR "front-line" staff and volunteers to assess specific skills and training needs. By using the **CYFAR Core Competency Self-assessment** and **CYFAR Core Competencies: Professional Development Planning Tool**, supervisors and staff can work together to plan professional development for any of the skills identified as needing improvement. Professional development resources to enhance each of the CYFAR Core Competencies can be found on the CYFAR.org website. We have found this to be a powerful planning tool for anyone considering initiating a NYS Seed to Supper program.*