

A Time for Food: The East Austin Food Security Food Improvement Plan
(Planning for East Austin's Urban Food Systems through Community Networks and Vocational Training)

Project Duration: 12 months

Amount requested: \$25,000

Funding source: USDA NIFA Community Foods Project

Low-income residents in East Austin, TX suffer from food insecurity, resulting from limited food resources and poor nutritional education. Over the last decade, East Austin's unemployment rate has been triple that of the rest of Travis County. Veterans have higher unemployment rates than the general population, and many require additional training in order to become professionally competitive in central Texas.

This project will create and strengthen existing networks thereby improving food security in East Austin, TX. Stakeholder partnerships will be forged in education and outreach; local government; local urban farmers, marketers, transportation and restaurants; non-profit resource management; local businesses; and academia.

Partners will facilitate planning for programs to provide education and accessibility to healthy food in East Austin. This includes defining support and incentives to increase sustainable agriculture; developing relationships to increase food security through municipal, academic, agricultural, and community networks; and training program development that will enable veterans to become successful participants in central Texas' emerging urban agricultural economy.

Proposed activities include meetings to establish partnerships; defining the food needs of returning veterans and low-income community members in East Austin; stakeholder plans for programmatic implementation; and pilot projects. Partners with the Texas State University Departments of Agriculture and Geography, and The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment will also develop curriculum for an innovative veteran vocational program.