

Judges' Feedback: **on writing goals, collecting quantitative data, and measuring impact**

(the following comments were provided by the 2022 award evaluators, these evaluators shall remain anonymous to maintain the integrity of the evaluation process)

- Your impacts should show the "so what?" of your educational efforts. For example, if you taught children to plant seeds, they could formally demonstrate to you this new skill – planting seeds and this could be some of the data you collect. If you teach children that some vegetables come from roots and some vegetables come from the top of the plant, then you could conduct a survey (verbal for preschoolers) that demonstrates they know carrots come from *under* the ground and lettuce comes from *above* the ground, etc. Then, you would have quantitative data to show knowledge gained.
- You could measure knowledge gained with the kids by asking them to identify vegetables in the garden before the lesson and then after. There are all kinds of methods to measure knowledge gained with kid and adult activities. Many are part of the JMG curriculum and online gardening activities.
- You could also measure increased diversity and quantities of fresh produce with your adult population, additionally their sense of well-being and belonging because of being part of this program (receiving fresh produce from MG Garden) and getting visits by MGs or whomever delivers the garden produce to them. You can use interviews and surveys to collect that information. You can also track participants and who have started a vegetable garden or implemented some of the recommended practices because of your program.
- To measure your impacts, classroom teachers could administer a *short* survey instrument (developed by your group) to measure student knowledge of seed types, what plants need to grow, scents, etc. You could do the post survey (same questions) in the garden after the lesson or request the classroom teachers administer the short post survey to see what the kids learned. You might leave space on your post survey for comments from the kids.
- Make your goals align with your impacts. For example, "85% of participants will identify the correct tree planting time in our community" or "80% of participants will correctly identify 3 recommended tree varieties for your region in Texas." Then, do a short survey at the end of the workshop to gain your results/impact.
- To show impact, specify the number of classes as well as the number of participants. But it is also about more than just the number of participants. We want people to put into practice what is presented. An easy way to do this is to have a small workshop evaluation, (a 5x5 piece of paper) asking how likely the participant is to put into practice

something they learned. You can use a scale of *not at all* to *very likely* and report those results.

- Another way of reporting your results is by calculating knowledge gained, it's a clearer way to represent the data. Several tools exist online. See % change calculators.
- If you train 18 MGs in the five steps of trialing a plant variety. The measurable impact should tell you the "so what" of conducting your research. To get some measurable impacts, you might send a survey to the participating MGs to see if they learned the steps in the trialing process. For example, they learned how to identify and rogue out non-contender plants (by sight, taste, measurement, etc.)
- Or train x number of Master Gardeners to transplant plugs with a minimum of 2% loss. Then measure that - use a survey of your MG volunteers to measure their understanding, skills, and/or observe the success of the transplants, etc. For something to have an impact, you need to be able to measure it.
- You could make the goal more measurable for children by having them demonstrate they know how to harvest using the different methods. You might give the kids a survey to see which they liked, which they didn't. (Use a smiley or sad face instead of numbers or yes/no.) Were students successful in raising their sweet potato vines? Did they eat the produce from the vines? That could be measured in a survey. Impacts always measure the "so what" of your actions/teaching.
- With adults (and kids) you can also measure their intention to change. For example, the adults could be surveyed after you give them food and recipes. Do they intend to try the recipes? As a result of trying the recipes, do they intend to increase their intake of say sweet potatoes - or lettuce types?
- Your first goal could read "Fourth graders will identify the different parts of the leaf." You're going to be measuring what the 4th graders did and did not learn from the lesson. The impact is quantitative. It could read "One hundred percent of students successfully identified parts of the leaf on their worksheets." Impacts measure learning gained, skills learned, attitude change and/or intention to change.
- For measuring learning outcomes, you could have a quick pre and post poll (raise of hands) of the kids when identifying seeds, plants etc. You could have included the results of the "question-answer" games with the seeds. You'll need a person to track results for you during the session.

