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Community-Based Education Program



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Promotional Copy

#4200 – Seed Saving Models

Organization Information

It is the mission of the organization to provide a space in which students and faculty can learn about, and participate in, the production and consumption of ecologically sound foods. We seek to integrate with community food programming in the provision of ecologically sound, and ethically produced foods. We seek to provide academic educational opportunities in the form of TCCBE projects and integration with courses. Through academic and volunteer programming, we aim to facilitate food-related skill-building.

Project Information

Biological diversity held on farms is declining. The rise of modernized agriculture has in many ways contributed to the decline of many traditional crop-varieties. There currently exists a movement to preserve the diversity, both genetic and cultural, which is associated with many crops, including those which are: open-pollinated, heirloom, traditional, and indigenous. This movement includes a wide variety of community based projects in seed banking and seed saving projects as well as memory banks and oral histories.

For the last five years our organization has saved our own tomato, pepper, bean, and garlic seeds. Some of those seeds have been contributed to various community gardens but most are either replanted in the gardens or gifted to various volunteers. In dialogue with other community members it seems that there is a need for a more formal community seed saving operation.

The purpose of this project is to investigate the history and operation of other community seed saving projects across North America and make recommendations as to how this type of project might best be established by the our organization.

Benefit to the Host Organization and Community

This project has the potential for significant benefits to be realized by the Peterborough community. The first part of the project will be particularly useful for any group wishing to develop or expand a seed-saving initiative by documenting the successes and diversity of models which exist. The second report will be most useful for our specific organization by suggesting mechanisms which we can use to better support our goal of increasing food production in the community. If the model suggested is feasible, it has the potential to develop a project which will benefit the community through making locally produced seeds more available and increasing seed saving as a whole. Additionally the service work component of this project will be of benefit to the community as the literal fruits of the students' labors will be donated to community meal programming.

What students might learn

The student who undertakes this project will have the opportunity to learn about the history, structure and operations of community based organizations. They will have the opportunity to practice writing for an organization. They will develop researching skills which may include online research, archival research, and primary research. They will also have the opportunity to learn first hand about growing food and seed saving.

Screening or Training Requirements

None

Skills or Experience Needed

- Working cooperatively,
- Good communication skills
- Willingness to work outside
- Ability to work independently
- Organized

Resources Required for Project Provided by Host

Printing costs and long distance calls made via Skype will be covered by the host organization. Travel expenses to visit seed-saving projects and companies within Ontario may be negotiated with the host supervisor.