



Oregon Child Development Coalition
COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT SUMMARY 2010

OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

Summary of any significant changes in the information in the Community Assessment determined during the annual review of the Community Assessment including changes in the services areas. Description of any proposed changes in the program that have resulted from a reconsideration of the decisions described in the six areas listed in 45 CFR 1305.3 (c).

- Determine the program’s philosophy and long-range program objective.

The economic situation continues to impact the Oregon economy and statewide services. Net income for farmers and ranchers fell 41 percent in 2009, a decline that a statewide analyst called “staggering.” Brent Searle of the Oregon Department of Agriculture reported Oregon new farm income at less than \$563 million after hitting a record \$1.3 billion in 2004. Willamette Valley numbers, where OCDC operates half of its centers mirrored the statewide drop through not as dramatically. For example in Marion County gross farm sales fell by fifteen percent and in Polk County they fell by seven percent. The heaviest losses were in grass and legume seeds which do not depend upon migrant and seasonal farmworkers. Wineries, once a strong industry in the State also fell in 2009, with increased concerns over reducing cost production. (Statesman Journal, September 10, 2010)

On an encouraging note, there is speculation of a new market for blueberries. The government of India lifted restrictions on fresh blueberry imports in July of 2008. Marketing surveys indicated Indians like the taste of blueberries and with more than a billion people populating the country, this could be a real opportunity for blueberry growers in Oregon. While visiting the country, Jeff Malensky of Oregon Berry Packing Co. noted that vendors are selling his product in high-priced markets “for a very high price,” boding well for the farmers in Oregon if they can capture the market. Malensky predicts changes in the next five or ten years in the market.

Several “Farm to School and School Garden” projects are also flourishing in Oregon. According to the Capitol Press, March 2010, USDA reviewed the programs in April of 2010 and sixty-six school districts or one third of all districts in Oregon are now buying some food from local growers or local food processors. The Farm to School initiative is also enhanced by the Farm to Table movement that links agricultural growers and small farmers with restaurants and vineyards. The Annual Farmer Chef Connection brought together 115 buyers and 80 producers to enhance the goal of creating a regional food economy through the development of an online market called Food Hub. The Food Hub site offers members the chance to search as a buyer or a seller, by product and is offered in partnership with EcoTrust.

The economy is not the only hardship facing Oregon agricultural output. A cool spring ended with the month of June being the wettest ever recorded with record rain fall. Strawberries rotted in the field and cherry trees did not blossom in a timely way resulting in low yields in these crops and others.

While these issues have been staggering for growers in Oregon, they are confident in the future and continuing to expand. According to the Fruit Growers News in February, 2010, cherry production continues to expand and has been an excellent crop over the past years. Crop size in all of the Northwest, including Oregon grew from 8 million boxes a year in 1999 to 20 plus million in 2009. Growers are not only seeing bigger demand but are also striving for quality. They are picking and packing the larger fruit which yields higher prices. This process “adds to the cost of picking but saves at packing” (Shrum, Eric of Orchard View Farms, The Dalles, Oregon in Fruit Growers News, February 2010). This could impact the number of farm workers needed to pick the fruit in the June season.

Future trends in cherry production are related to messaging the fruit as a contributing factor to health of consumers. Tart cherries contain a high level of antioxidants and can contribute to prostrate health, stemming diabetes and have anti inflammatory properties. Sweet cherries may have the same properties which could increase consumption. These factors will certainly influence the migrant stream from California to Hood River and Wasco Counties in June and may require expansion of services in these counties.

As a result of these mixed factors OCDC has not made any changes in the long-range and short-range program objectives.

- Determine the type of services and program option or options to be provided.

Community Assessment is an ongoing process in which the counties and the agency are engaging. OCDC responds to the needs of the community and the families served by the agency through several mechanisms. For example, when crop harvests extend longer than expected, the county can apply for and receive extended house or weeks of service. The community assessment also led to two major initiatives in the 2009-2010. OCDC wrote for MSHS expansion of migrant services in South Marion County based on the analysis of the migrant population in that county and the waiting lists in Polk and North Marion Counties. These families were served by the program option that has been successful for the migrant and seasonal families in the State. This option is a classroom based option of varying hours and varying months. The length of service is directly aligned with the crop rotations and agricultural needs in the communities.

Additionally, OCDC applied for an EHS grant based, in part, on the data provided in the community assessment. Statewide data on the vastly limited services for children ages birth to three and the estimated numbers of Migrant and Seasonal families in each county formed the basis of a successful application requesting 352 new slots for Oregon. Of these, 160 seasonal families are being offered a year long program and 192 migrant families are receiving a Migrant program that corresponds with agricultural demands and crop rotation.

- Determine the recruitment area of the program.

The estimated migrant and seasonal populations in Oregon vary county by county and OCDC is present in nearly all of the areas where Migrant and Seasonal families are anticipated to be working. There has been need identified in other counties that have high agricultural yields but current resources and slot allocation have hindered expansion into these areas, although planning continues to see how these needs might be met. The counties that have been identified as those with immediate need are Lane, Morrow, Union and Yamhill. Preliminary negotiations with Region X Head Start partners and other key stakeholders in these counties are underway to complete an analysis of the need for MSHS services.

- If applicable, determine the recruitment areas of delegate agencies: Not Applicable
- Determine the locations of centers and home-based programs.

OCDC offers a center based option throughout the state as the agency’s program option. It varies in length from 4 weeks of 12 hour days to 32 weeks of six hour days for the year long program. The length of all programs is determined by the needs of the families, the crop cycle and the availability of facilities. The agency opened a new state of the art facility in Clackamas County, the county with the largest number of estimated migrant and seasonal workers in Oregon. The building was completed in May and began serving children with a Migrant and EHS program in the summer of 2010. OCDC has located several key centers in South Marion County in response to obtaining an expansion of 90 new Migrant slots and 64 new EHS seasonal slots for that county. These centers were located in South Marion County due to the large numbers of unserved Migrant families and the high numbers of unserved infants and toddlers and preschoolers in that same location.

Recently, discussions have begun towards a collaborative effort with two Regional Head Start programs to offer summer services for Migrant and Seasonal children using buildings that are not operated by these programs in the summer months. The two identified locations are McMinnville in Yamhill County, and Elgin in Union County.

- Set the criteria that define the types of children and families that will be given priority for recruitment and selection.

There have been no changes in the families and children who will be given priority for recruitment and selection in the MSHS programs. However, the EHS/MSHS program has created an opportunity to review the priorities on selection as families move from EHS to MSHS.

With the assistance of the Auditor, who reviewed OCDC services, further clarification was made with the federal OHS office that SNAP and even WIC were considered Public Assistance. Given that knowledge OCDC is reinstating its policy with SNAP being a Public Assistance program in the definition of public assistance for the eligibility criteria for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start services per the OCDC Board of Directors decision.

GEOGRAPHIC AREA

- *OCDC Service Area Map is included and corresponds to the State of Oregon and county catchment areas as stated in the map.*