

Grace R. Peterson

92% FNP Appointment

Requested Action: Promotion from Assistant Extension Agent to Associate Extension Agent

Red River Research Station

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Grace Peterson received her Ph.D. in Microbiology from the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio in 1986. She was a National Institute of Health post-doctoral fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 1986 through 1988, specializing in molecular genetics. She later continued her education in the field of psychology, and received a Masters degree in Counseling and Guidance from Louisiana Tech University in 2006.

Currently, she is continuing her education through Louisiana State University to complete specialization in program development and evaluation. She has completed six credit hours toward the completion of that course of study.

Dr. Peterson joined the LSU AgCenter team in October 2007 as a Family Nutrition Program (FNP) Gardening Agent in the Northwest Region. Her appointment focuses on the creation of youth and community gardening initiatives, and garden-based nutrition programs with a target audience of food stamp eligible families and individuals.

As an Assistant Extension Agent, Dr. Peterson's duties include program development, and the implementation and delivery of programs to the FNP target audience. She establishes training programs for volunteers, and coordinates initiatives with a wide range of local government and community agencies.

Grace Peterson develops her work and her professional relationships with a sense of vision and a foundation of values and principles that resonate with those expressed in the Mission Statement of the LSU AgCenter. She aims, through her educational programs and professional communications, to develop human and community resources that will positively impact the well-being of her clients. Her ideal is to champion initiatives that engage the enthusiasm of her target audience, sustain our environment, and encourage our youth to reach for a healthy and meaningful future.

1. Documentation of Major Program Areas and Initiatives

The following are the major program areas that Dr. Peterson has developed or facilitated:

FNP/SNAP-ed

Dr. Peterson has developed innovative and sustainable ways to create initiatives that meet the stated Family Nutrition Program (FNP) and SNAP (Food Stamp) Nutrition Education Program Objectives. These objectives include:

- Dietary Quality: Specifically increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables.
- Shopping Behavior/Food Resource Management: Specifically providing gardening education to save food dollars.

- Food Security: Specifically directing the establishment and maintenance of vegetable gardens in “food desert” neighborhoods.
- Food Safety: Specifically providing education about the safe handling of produce from garden to plate.
- Home Gardening: Specifically to provide gardening education that will allow SNAP-eligible individuals families to grow their own fruits and vegetables.

Youth and Community Garden Development Program

Dr. Peterson has established a successful gardening program. The Youth and Community Garden Development Program is the cornerstone of her work. This program includes the following components, and how those components are implemented, in community and school settings:

- Growing healthy, inexpensive food by the establishment and maintenance of community vegetable gardens.
- Nutrition education provided through garden-based nutrition lessons.
- Promotion of healthy lifestyles through on-going support and education about the value community gardens provide for healthy food, physical activity, and strong communities.
- Community development through on-going guidance for community building and leadership training.
- Creation of social networks through modeling and encouraging collaboration with other organizations and institutions.
- Personal empowerment through encouragement of community members to accept leadership roles and communicate with others about the health issues affecting their neighborhoods.
- Youth education through the development of afterschool and summer garden-based nutrition programs.
- Adult and youth leadership development through the development of leadership training and providing on-going leadership support.
- Guiding the development of a healthy local food system through educating local policy makers, guiding the development of a community vision, and assembly of a food system taskforce.

Youth and Community Garden Volunteer Training

Dr. Peterson has been able to access the great potential for volunteer service in our area through several initiatives and trainings. The Youth and Community Garden Volunteer Training Program is designed to have maximum impact and effectiveness, enabling volunteers to learn necessary skills and build supportive connections. This allows them to easily move into meaningful volunteer positions. Dr. Peterson’s standards to make each presentation most effective for the volunteers are that it engages the interest of her audience, that it clearly conveys practical information and skills, that it be part of a carefully planned set of objectives and goals, that the results are measureable, and that the training be replicable by other Extension Agents.

This basic volunteer training includes 10 classroom hours covering sustainable vegetable gardening, community garden leadership, and garden-based nutrition education. Master Gardeners who participate in this training attain the status of Advanced Master Gardener specializing in youth and community gardening. The training is also open to community members who are interested in assisting with the establishment or maintenance of community gardens in their neighborhoods. The educational setting of the training program not only teaches the skills necessary for creating sustainable community gardens, it also provides a setting in which Master Gardeners and community gardeners can build strong relationships which create the foundation for long-term volunteer support in target neighborhoods. Participants are asked to pledge at least 10 hours of volunteer time to assist with youth and community gardens.

Understanding the critical importance of leadership for successful community gardens, Grace developed *Vision-centered Leadership for Community Gardeners* in addition to the basic *Youth and Community Garden Volunteer Training*. *Vision-centered Leadership for Community Gardeners* is an advanced volunteer training program that teaches the skills of creating a vision and mission, active listening, collaboration, and strategic planning. Participants of this program are prepared to be community garden team leaders.

Junior Master Gardener - Health and Nutrition from the Garden

This curriculum contains classroom lessons that teach some of the fundamentals of vegetable gardening and garden-based nutrition education for youth in the 3rd-5th grades. It includes a component of community service that helps youth gain an understanding of the challenges presented by limited access to healthy food.

Health and Nutrition from the Garden for Youth and Adults

This is a set of garden-based nutrition education lessons developed by Dr. Peterson that addresses a variety of vegetable gardening and nutrition topics. The lessons are designed to be customized for target clientele in many different settings and are adaptable for different contexts of time constraints, ages, and class composition. These are hands-on garden and nutrition lessons for both youth and adults suitable for education in garden settings.

Food Initiative Taskforce (FIT) for Kids

Grace Peterson was instrumental in the development of FIT for Kids, an innovative program that empowers youth to make a difference in their neighborhoods while participating in garden-based nutrition education. Lessons are taught in the context of making a positive impact on the community as they learn gardening, nutrition, leadership, and service. Youth participants learn to see their growing skills and daily food choices in terms of the larger issues of sustainable food systems and food security. Dr. Peterson plans to expand this model to area community centers and schools, creating a replicable program that can be of value to AgCenter staff throughout the state.

Urban Youth Farmers

Dr. Peterson partnered with Denyse Cummins, LSU AgCenter Area Horticulturist, to create an innovative training program targeting at-risk youth between the ages of 14 and 17. Youth participants learn skills in areas such as time-keeping, responsibility, nutrition, communications, marketing, business, and accountability within the framework of maintaining a commercial vegetable garden at Valencia Park Community Center. These employment and life skills are learned through the hands-on activities of planting, maintaining, harvesting and marketing vegetables. This pilot program addresses a growing need for research based training in urban agriculture and the development of neighborhood produce markets. The program also addresses the issue of access to healthy food in a "food desert" neighborhood.

Accessible Food System Development Program

In November 2010, Grace Peterson organized a group of seven local professionals and citizens to facilitate the implementation of the goal for a Healthy Local Food System that was included in the Shreveport Comprehensive Master Plan. This group, The Caddo Local Food System Taskforce, represents an initiative to bring ideas, knowledge, and best practices together into one coherent picture with a proposed plan of action to make a Healthy Local Food System in Shreveport/Caddo a reality by 2030.

2. Advisory Process and Critical Issue Responsiveness

In order to meet the needs of her clientele, Dr. Peterson created an environment of participatory communication that encourages the free flow of information and creative ideas. She believes that the activities and deliberations of committees and advisory boards are most effective in the context of a community spirit that values the insights and contributions of every member.

Dr. Peterson founded the Red River Coalition of Community Gardeners (RRCCG) as a way for community members to actively participate in the management of the gardens and share information, skills, resources, and enthusiasm with one another. Dr. Peterson attends RRCCG monthly meetings to get input and guidance in the on-going development of the Youth and Community Garden Development Program. She also attends RRCCG Board Meetings to learn how to give long-term support to the vision and mission of the coalition.

Dr. Peterson attends the regional FCS Advisory Council meetings and the regional Nutrition Advisory Council meetings to gain insights and information about the needs and concerns of our local stakeholders. She has presented information about the benefits of garden-based nutrition education in school and community settings, and has offered suggestions for including garden-based nutrition education programming to enhance existing nutrition programs.

In response to the critical issue of food access, she has coordinated efforts with several agencies and food advocacy groups in Northwest Louisiana to identify “food deserts” and create an effective long term strategy to alleviate the problem. “Food deserts” are areas in which residents have little or no access to healthy food. There are three different reasons for limited access: physical proximity, financial resources, and nutritional knowledge. People who live in “food deserts” have a higher rate of nutrition-related diseases, including diabetes, heart disease, and obesity.

Dr. Peterson was instrumental in founding the Caddo Food System Taskforce. Consisting of seven volunteer professionals and citizens, the taskforce is systematically collecting information about the status of food security in the Northwest region of Louisiana, coordinating the vision of various stakeholders, and creating a set of recommendations for a sustainable healthy local food system that can be utilized by local educators, business leaders, and policy makers.

3. Innovative Teaching Methods, Knowledge, and Application of New Technology

Dr. Peterson has used several innovative principles in creating the Red River Coalition of Community Gardeners that enlist the enthusiastic efforts of volunteers, whose combined volunteer time has exceeded 7,800 hours since the fall of 2009.

First among these principles are teachings about leadership. Volunteers and community gardeners are invited to an advanced leadership training, *Vision-centered Leadership for Community Gardeners*, where members learn about shared participatory leadership that values everyone’s contributions and strives for consensus decision making. Following the idea expressed by John Quincy Adams, “*If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, be more, and become more, you are a leader,*” participants learn to identify themselves as leaders with important contributions to give their community.

Second, Dr. Peterson believes that one of the essential ingredients in a healthy food system and healthy lifestyle is strong community. All of her training initiatives emphasize the skills of community building. Board meetings and monthly RRCCG meetings are examples of shared community in action. Members often remark that these are the only meetings they attend where they are reluctant to leave.

And third, an innovative set of principles and processes teach people how to create visions and missions that are owned by every member of the community and engage each person’s commitment

and enthusiasm. The Red River Coalition of Community Gardeners (RRCCG) began with a full day of visioning. The vision and mission that resulted are the reference point of every meeting, and they guide choices and decisions. The vision and mission statements for the RRCCG are as follows:

Vision Statement: *Our vision is that everyone in the Shreveport/Bossier area has access to community gardens, nutritious food, and the knowledge and skills necessary to sustain a fulfilling and healthy lifestyle.*

Mission Statement: *The Red River Coalition of Community Gardeners creates and maintains community gardens in the Shreveport/Bossier area. Using sustainable practices, we grow healthy food, provide education for healthy lifestyles, and empower people to share their unique contributions.*

Short Mission Statement: *We create gathering places where people grow together.*

Too often, groups lose energy and commitment by focusing on problems and things that they lack. Keeping focus on clear outcomes and the available resources engages participants' enthusiasm and creativity.

Dr. Peterson has also maximized the use of advanced technology to further the impact of her programs. Students participating in the FIT for Kids program have a blog on which they can post reflections, ideas, and photographs (www.fitforkids.wordpress.com). Another blog, www.louisianacommunitygardens.wordpress.com, is available to communicate news and ideas to people interested in developing and maintaining youth and community gardens. Dr. Peterson also manages the RRCCG website – www.rrccg.org – that shares current events and pictures from each of the gardens. *Community Garden News*, an e-newsletter, regularly informs people about up-coming events, exciting happenings, healthy recipes, and other useful information.

One innovation with powerful impact is the use of Flip video cameras as a teaching aid. Students learn to video record each other as they introduce and explain different garden and nutrition activities. The videos are edited and then uploaded to YouTube. Several communication specialists have spoken with the youth about the necessary skills for professional video presentations. When young people can see themselves speaking about the value and skills of a healthy lifestyle, they receive a tremendous affirmation and reinforcement for their own participation. A program that can impact a participant's self image as well as their knowledge has far reaching potential.

Two Facebook pages have been started to more extensively utilize the power of social media. These pages are one more tool of community building, particularly relevant to the fast paced world of target youth groups. Dr. Peterson believes that sustainable community needs to be encouraged, whether this is in the traditional context of neighborhood gatherings or the new technologies of cyberspace. These Facebook pages are:

Valencia Youth Garden and Urban Farm
Red River Coalition of Community Gardeners

As new technologies are developed, ways will be found to integrate them into programs and trainings to maximize the effectiveness of program delivery.

4. Program Delivery Effectiveness Demonstrated by Evaluation, Change and Adoption

All of Grace Peterson's programs are planned to include measures of effectiveness. Evaluation is a cornerstone of continual program improvement. How each program addresses the goals of FNP and the mission of the Ag Center is being measured and demonstrated by several kinds of data. The logic model provides the structure that assesses current resources and guides program choices toward measureable outcomes. Overall, the evaluation results show that the programs are effective ways to reach the

targeted goals. Dr. Peterson believes that, over time, evaluation will show that these programs are not only effective, but sustainable and replicable.

The effectiveness of the programs is ably demonstrated by some of the standard evaluation tools and measurements available. Dr. Peterson also believes that the crucial indicator of effectiveness – the actual adoption and utilization of new knowledge and behaviors – is best shown by some of the anecdotal reports gathered from program participants and partner agencies.

Evaluated Programs:

Youth and Community Garden Development Program

Twenty-eight evaluations were given out to participants and volunteers, with 22 returned.

These evaluations showed the following program impacts:

- 91% report eating more fruits and vegetables
- 67% report spending less money on food
- 73% report being better able to provide food for their families
- 100% report learning new gardening skills
- 91% report giving extra food to other people
- 100% report meaningful volunteer experiences
- 86% report growing food at home

Participant comments:

"I have improved my eating habits. I have learned gardening skills. I have given my time to a worthy cause."

"Being involved with this program has helped me appreciate farmers, enjoy fresh vegetables, develop relationships with neighbors, and recognize the hardships of a community in a food desert."

Ten evaluations were given out to program partner agencies and institutions, with six returned. The following comments indicate how this program impacted their own outcomes and goals.

Centenary College: *"The students who've chosen to work with the LSU AgCenter have had positive experiences, learned a lot and made some great memories. One of our students has even grown her experience with the AgCenter into an ongoing internship opportunity."*

Shreveport Green: *"The understanding of the complete circle of healthy foods and healthy living has greatly impacted our outreach and programming."*

City of Shreveport Public Assembly and Recreation (SPAR): *"It truly is immeasurable how positively this program has impacted our organization....I personally feel that the Community Garden program has been one of SPAR's biggest successes. It has reached a wider range of people than any other and has been growing at a steady rate over time. We are truly proud of the program and we wouldn't be the same without it."*

Youth and Community Gardening Volunteer Training

This program has been offered six times since the summer of 2008 and a total of 100 participants have completed the training. Seventy-one evaluations have been distributed with 64 returned.

Highlights of program results are summarized as follows:

Participants increased knowledge in the following areas:

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Percent increase in knowledge</u>
Food deserts	84%
Benefits of community gardens	47%
Components of Community Garden Programs	86%
Principles of sustainable vegetable gardening	50%
Planting for greater harvest	56%
Community garden leadership	93%
Installation of a new community garden	100%

Intention of action:

- 89% show a level of intention to help others start and maintain community gardens
- 11% were already doing this at the time of the training

Action:

The number of hours volunteers actually contributed to the community garden effort is one of the strongest demonstrable program impacts.

Volunteer hours reported: 7,896 volunteer hours have been documented from September 30, 2009 to July 1, 2011

Participant comments:

"I liked learning all the things that can be done in a community garden besides growing crops. I think we were given everything – handouts, forms, powerpoints – to take this to any level we choose."

"I learned about all the ways that community gardens enrich neighborhoods besides just providing fresh produce!"

Vision-Centered Leadership for Community Gardeners

This program has been offered one time with 10 participants completing the training and six evaluations returned. The following summarizes the results of the evaluation data:

Participants Increased knowledge in the following areas:

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Percent increase in knowledge</u>
Vision-centered leadership	67%
Facilitation of community garden meetings	60%
Help others identify and utilize resources	34%
Taking on leadership roles	20%
Inspiring others to be leaders	54%
Guiding groups to start community gardens	43%
Combining community gardens and local health resources	41%

Intention of Action:

- 67% of participants indicated the intention to give presentations about the benefits of community gardens with the other 33% reporting already doing this.
- 67% of participants indicated intention of helping others start and maintain community gardens with the other 33% already doing this.
- 100% of participants indicated the intention to provide education to community gardeners.
- 67% of participants indicated the intention to facilitate a community garden leadership team

with 16% reporting “maybe” and 17% already doing this.

FIT for Kids

This program was offered the first time as a pilot in the summer of 2010. Twenty youth participated with 8 filling out evaluations and 13 making impact statements. In the summer of 2011, 22 youth participated with 12 completing evaluations and making impact statements. The highlights for each summer are recorded below:

Evaluation highlights from 2010:

100% of the participants reported being able to care for vegetable plants in a garden either by themselves or with some help.

88% of the participants reported eating vegetables they grow in the garden.

100% of the participants report being able to prepare and cook vegetables either by themselves or with some help.

100% of the participants report being able to tell other people why it is important to eat vegetables and fruits either by themselves or with some help.

Participant comments from 2010:

“I can cook much healthier foods. I know how to pick fruits and vegetables much easier. I learned how to be a leader and learned how to come out of my shell and speak out.”

“The garden means a lot to me but the most important thing I learned in the garden was how to work with people, build friendships, help others, and make my community a better place.”

Evaluation highlights from 2011:

100% of participants report knowing more about how to eat a healthy diet.

100% of participants report trying new foods.

83% of participants report eating more vegetables in their diets.

100% of participants report learning new gardening skills.

Participant comments from 2011:

“I know I can bring people together so I can tell them how to eat healthier and how to grow their own garden or start one together.”

“I can now grow healthy food for my family, the community, and myself. I know how to garden, choose the right foods in the stores, and to keep a garden in good condition.”

“I know that the FIT for Kids program has impacted the Stoner Hill community because when people see what we do to make their community stronger they thank us for what we do.”

“Because of this program, I learned how to make a community better and more healthy. I can’t just garden at one community, I can do it at all communities.”

Urban Youth Farmers

This program was offered the first time as a pilot in the summer of 2011. Six youth, ages 14 and 15, applied for, participated in, and completed the program. This first year, over 1,200 pounds of produce was harvested. Over 500 pounds of this produce was sold at a weekly on-site farmer’s market, named *Valencia’s Veggies*, that was developed by the youth participants. Over 400 pounds of produce was sold to Jason Brady owner of Wine Country Bistro, a local restaurant. Over 300 pounds was given to the youth participants, eaten by other youth in the summer program at the community center, or donated to senior citizens living in the surrounding neighborhood. Money from the sale of produce is used to purchase supplies and seeds for the upcoming planting seasons.

Youth participants wrote essays describing how the Urban Youth Farmers Program affected their lives. Excerpts from their essays include:

"Going to the urban farm everyday has helped me with things like how to pick and grow vegetables."

"The food (we grew) was sold cheaper and tasted better than the store's brand."

"It feels good to be a leader and making a difference in the community I live in."

"This experience is important in my life because it taught me the value of fruits and vegetables."

"This had made a tremendous impact on my life. It has taught me that working in the sun is not that bad if you're working for something that others and yourself can benefit from."

"I know how to harvest, grow, and sell healthy foods. I think if we keep this program it could change our community and it could expand throughout the city then state and maybe our whole country."

5. Development and Presentation of Research Based Materials

Grace Peterson has developed and presented research based materials to community residents, professionals, local agencies and policy makers utilizing several different media formats. The formats of the presentations take advantage of a rich range of technology and personal contact to maximize their effectiveness.

The presentations she has developed and delivered represent the most current research based information and best practices. Dr. Peterson regularly reviews information resources and consults with peer professionals to insure the quality of material she presents. Program materials are continually being improved, and updates in materials, such as brochures and manuals, are made available to past and present program participants.

Presentations:

The presentations developed by Dr. Peterson have been given in multiple locations to a diverse range of audiences. Several are in formats that could be easily utilized by other extension staff. The following information summarizes the delivery of 246 presentations:

Youth and Community Garden Development Program Presentations:

- **Benefits of Youth and Community Gardens**
Teaches interested groups and community members about the short and long term benefits of community gardens for health, economy, and community
This presentation has been given 48 times to civic groups and policy makers.
- **Benefits of School Gardens**
Informs educators about the educational, health, and community benefits of school gardens and the factors involved in maintaining a sustainable garden
This presentation has been given 4 times to civic groups and educational organizations.
- **Starting a Community Garden**
Informs interested groups and persons about the logistics, resources, and commitment needed to begin and sustain a community gardening effort
This presentation has been given 5 times to church and community groups.
- **Spring Vegetable Gardening**
Teaches about the appropriate plants, timing, and special considerations needed to maintain a successful spring vegetable garden
This presentation has been given 24 times to youth and community gardeners, volunteers, and home gardeners.
- **Fall Vegetable Gardening**
Teaches about the appropriate plants, timing, and special considerations needed to maintain a successful fall vegetable garden

This presentation has been given 22 times to youth and community gardeners, volunteers, and home gardeners.

- **Building a Community Garden Team**

Describes leadership roles and strategies needed for a successful, sustainable community garden

This presentation has been given 11 times to community garden leadership teams.

- **Building a School Garden Team**

Describes leadership roles and strategies needed for a successful, sustainable school garden

This presentation has been given 3 times to school administrators and educators.

- **Garden-based Nutrition Education for Schools and Communities**

Describes successful programs that combine gardening and nutrition education

This presentation has been given 8 times to civic groups and educators.

- **Engaging the Neighbors in Your Community Garden**

Teaches communication skills and strategies to effectively engage the participation of the surrounding neighborhood in community garden activities

This presentation has been given 5 times to community garden leadership teams.

- **Vermicomposting**

Introduces the practice of vermiculture and teaches participants the basics of making and maintaining worm bins

This presentation has been given 7 times to youth and community gardeners, volunteers, and home gardeners.

- **Building Healthy Soil**

Teaches about the importance of soil for plant health and how to improve existing soil

This presentation has been given 8 times to youth and community gardeners, volunteers, and home gardeners.

- **Composting for Community Gardens**

Teaches the basics of composting including materials, management, and usage of compost

This presentation has been given 6 times to youth and community gardeners, volunteers, and home gardeners.

- **Starting Seeds for Spring Vegetable Transplants**

Teaches how to start spring vegetable plants from seed and care for young transplants

This presentation has been given 1 time to youth and community gardeners, and volunteers.

- **Installing a Handicap Accessible Garden Bed**

Teaches the basics of making a tall garden bed including materials and techniques

This presentation has been given 3 times to youth and community gardeners, and volunteers.

- **Urban Agriculture – Community Gardens and Urban Farms**

Describes possible urban agriculture projects and informs about local initiatives.

This presentation has been given 5 times to civic groups and policy makers.

- **Planting a Vegetable Garden**

Teaches how to plan, prepare the soil, and plant a vegetable garden

This presentation has been given 6 times to youth and community gardeners, volunteers, and home gardeners.

- **What Do Plants Need to Grow?**

Teaches basic plant science and how to maintain healthy vegetable plants

This presentation has been given 2 times to youth and community gardeners, volunteers, and home gardeners.

- **Creating a Vision and Mission Statement**

Teaches community groups about the importance of clear mission and vision, how these can be created by group process, and how they can be practically used in decision making and goals.
This presentation has been given 3 times to community garden leadership teams.

- **Sustainable Vegetable Gardening**

Introduces the concepts of sustainability and the different techniques needed to start and maintain a sustainable vegetable garden.

This presentation has been given 19 times to youth and community gardeners, volunteers, and home gardeners.

- **Community Garden Management**

Discusses the challenges of managing the “people” part of community gardens and offers workable solutions to common problems

This presentation has been given 9 times to community garden leadership teams.

- **Starting a Community Garden Program**

Teaches the basic components needed to develop a successful community garden program

This presentation has been given 2 times to organizations interested in initiating a community garden program in their area.

- **Installing a School/Community Garden**

Provides basic hands-on training for installing a school or community garden including design and building strategies

This presentation has been given 10 times youth and community gardeners, and volunteers.

- **Developing a Youth Gardening Program**

Teaches the basic components needed to develop a successful youth garden program

This presentation has been given 3 times to organizations interested in initiating a youth gardening program in their area.

- **Installing Irrigation in a Community Garden**

Provides basic hands-on training for installing an irrigation system in a community garden, including design and installation strategies

This presentation has been given 1 time to community gardeners and volunteers.

- **Adding Fruit Trees to a Community Garden**

Teaches about the installation of fruit trees, including selection of types and varieties

This presentation has been given 1 time to youth and community gardeners.

- **Preparing and Planting Seed Potatoes**

Provides basic hands-on training for cutting seed potatoes and proper planting techniques

This presentation has been given 2 times to youth and community gardeners, volunteers, and home gardeners.

- **Keeping Garden Records**

Teaches about the importance of keeping vegetable garden records including planting dates, successful varieties, and harvest quantities

This presentation has been given 2 times to youth and community gardeners, volunteers, and home gardeners.

- **Container Gardening**

Teaches about successfully growing vegetables in containers, including the types and varieties best suited for container gardening

This presentation has been given 4 times to youth and community gardeners, volunteers, and home gardeners.

Accessible Food System Development Program Presentations

- **What is Food Security?**

Introduces the issues of food security and food deserts, and the impact these have on our communities and well-being

This presentation has been given 6 times to civic groups and policy makers.

- **Creating a Healthy Local Food System**

Explains the six major components of a food system – production, processing, distribution, acquisition, consumption, and waste – and how the challenges of establishing a healthy local food system can be addressed in our communities

This presentation has been given 16 times to civic groups and policy makers.

6. Publications:

Grace Peterson has used both print and electronic publication to distribute information, educate the community, train volunteers, connect with peer professionals, and stimulate change among local policy makers.

Print Publications

- Community Garden Team Roles and Responsibilities, Revised July 2011.
- Choosing a Community Garden Site, Revised July 2011.
- Choosing a Garden Bed Design, Revised July 2011.
- Creating a Community Garden: Building the “People Structure”. Revised July 2011.
- Creating a Community Garden: Building the “Garden Structure”. Revised July 2011.
- Thinking about Starting a Community Garden? February 2011.
- Basic Vermicomposting for the Classroom and Home. January 2010.
- Benefits of School Gardens. December 2009.
- Cinderblock Garden Bed Design. December 2010.
- School Garden Team Roles and Responsibilities. Revised July 2011.
- School and Community Garden Preparation Activities. Revised December 2009.
- Creating Your School Garden. Revised July 2011.
- School Garden Design. September 2009.
- Healthy Local Food System. Revised July 2011.
- SNAP-ed Community Gardening Program. March 2010.
- LSU AgCenter Community Gardening Program. Revised April 2011.
- Red River Coalition of Community Gardeners. Revised April 2011.
- Community Garden Volunteer Program: How You Can Help. Revised May 2010.

Electronic Publications

- Community Garden News, emailed out regularly to interested persons. Has information about gardening, nutrition, upcoming events, and opportunities for involvement.

Powerpoint Presentations for volunteer use

- Let’s Talk about Community Gardens. Revised August 2010.

7. Mass Media and Electronic Outreach

Grace Peterson oversaw the creation of www.rrccg.org, the website used by the Red River Coalition of Community Gardeners to promote and share their activities. In addition, she has developed two blogs – www.louisianacommunitygardens.wordpress.com and <http://fitforkids.wordpress.com/summer-program/>. The first blog functions to inform gardeners and other interested persons about useful garden information, current issues and activities. The second, <http://fitforkids.wordpress.com/summer-program/>, was created to give the youth in Dr. Peterson's programs a venue for public expression. The youth post articles they have written, their own photographic record of garden activity, and links to videos posted on YouTube that they have created to introduce and teach garden activities. The following are excellent examples:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/communitygardener?feature=mhum#p/u/5/ndlKmeyWnpQ>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/communitygardener?feature=mhum#p/u/6/ibyP-VU7v5E>

Local newspaper and television coverage has been instrumental in creating public enthusiasm and support for Dr. Peterson's programs. She regularly contacts the media about program activities, and often has activities covered by local TV and radio stations, The Shreveport Times newspaper, and regional magazines.

Newspaper and Magazine Articles:

- A Growing Vision. The Shreveport Times. 08/09/2008
- Master Plan Meeting. The Shreveport Times. September 15, 2009.
- Community Garden Unites St. Catherine of Siena Church with Local Area. The Catholic Connection. November, 2009.
- Community gardens 'growing,' making a difference. LSU AgCenter Extension Programs Grow Louisiana. 2010
- Earth Day marks 40th anniversary. The Shreveport Times. April 22, 2010.
- LSU AgCenter's Community Garden Program. Louisiana Agriculture. Summer 2010.
- Plan Meals Ahead for Health, Savings. Living Well Magazine 10/01/2010
- HERA Awards. The Shreveport Times. 11/05/2010
- HERA Award Winners. The Forum. 11/17/2010
- Shreve students build peaceful garden and more. The Shreveport Times. 04/06/2011
- Area's first urban farm takes root in Valencia. The Shreveport Times. 05/12/2011
- Seeds of Hope with Community Gardens. SB (Shreveport/Bossier) Magazine. 7/2011
- Young gardeners offer taste of summer. The Shreveport Times. 8/3/11
- Urban farm program teaches youth entrepreneurship. The Market Bulletin. Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. 8/11/11
- Tackling childhood obesity. Photo. The Shreveport Times. 8/16/11
- About a third of us live in a food desert. The Shreveport Times. 8/17/11.

Television and Radio Programs:

- The LSU AgCenter Community Garden Program, Channel 3 3/18/2009
- The Benefits of Youth and Community Gardens, Channel 89.9, August 14, 2009
- Growing Green, Channel 3 08/09/2010
- Valencia Park Youth Host Spaghetti Lunch, Channel 6, 08/12/2010
- Valencia Park Youth Host Spaghetti Lunch, Channel 12, 08/12/2010
- Benefits of Youth and Community Gardens. Channel 91.3, 11/29/10
- Benefits of Youth and Community Gardens, Channel 6, 12/16/2010

- Valencia Youth Learn Gardening and Nutrition. Channel 89.9, 04/01/2011
- Urban Gardening at Valencia Park. Channel 33, 05/18/2011
- Planting a Fall Garden. Channel 6, 8/2/11.

Electronic Media:

- The Healthy Garden Blog. The Shreveport Times, 2008.
- LSU AgCenter spearheads community gardens. www.LSUAgCenter.com 6/17/2008
- LSU AgCenter summer activity helps Shreveport teens learn science, math through gardening. www.LSUAgCenter.com 7/25/2008
- Community gardeners form coalition to grow together, open house May 30 www.LSUAgCenter.com 5/26/2009
- Community gardeners harvest first SPAR garden, volunteer training spreads. www.LSUAgCenter.com, Fall 2009
- Community gardens blossom in Shreveport, www.LSUAgCenter.com, 07/30/2010
- Urban farm program teaches youth entrepreneurship. LSU System Media Sweep. 7/22/11

8. Cooperation/Collaboration with Other Faculty

Dr. Peterson has endeavored to insure that all of her programs and activities have a strong component of teamwork involving other AgCenter faculty. She has sought input and information at both the regional and state level. She has utilized the skill and expertise of fellow faculty in presenting educational experiences to program recipients. She has also contributed her skills and time to other faculty who have requested it. Grace Peterson firmly believes that her role is to work in cooperation with the entire network of AgCenter staff and faculty so that all of the diverse research based resources of the AgCenter are available in the most current and effective form for the benefit of her target populations. Teamwork multiplies exponentially the effectiveness of any one individual.

From the beginning of her employment with the LSU AgCenter, Dr. Peterson has actively collaborated with Denyse Cummins, Area Horticulture Agent, and Vicky Chesser, FNP Regional Coordinator, in program planning, development, and delivery. All of Grace's programming involves horticulture and nutrition components. Ms. Cummins and Ms. Chesser have been consulted regularly in their areas of expertise. Grace has also been called upon to assist those agents in their programming and presentations. The team of Dr. Peterson, Ms. Cummins, and Ms. Chesser were awarded the Denver T. & Ferne Loupe Extension Team Award by the LSU AgCenter in December 2008. The following programs have been developed with input from Ms. Cummins and Ms. Chesser:

- *Health and Nutrition from the Garden for Youth and Adults*
- *Food Initiative Taskforce (FIT) for Kids*
- *Youth and Community Gardening Volunteer Training*
- *Urban Youth Farmers* – Ms. Cummins is the lead developer of horticultural content for this program.

Dr. Peterson has worked with 4-H agents to establish gardening programs in various settings. She has worked with Katherine Pace at Sunset Acres Elementary School, West Shreveport Elementary School, Captain Shreve High School and Valencia Park Community Center. Grace has accompanied 4-H agents to meet with school officials concerning the establishment or expansion of school gardens at Meadowview Elementary School, Oil City Elementary School, North Caddo High School, and Parkway High School. She has also arranged for garden tours and given input for starting gardening programs to Kelleen Seitz, 4-H Victory Garden Extension Associate from Camp Grant Walker, and Erin Arcineaux, 4-H and EFNEP Gardening Agent from East Baton Rouge Parish.

Dr. Peterson has collaborated with research faculty by organizing programs that include field trips to the Red River Research Station. Youth and adults have toured the tomato greenhouses and received education from Dr. Hanna Hanna. Dr. Blair Buckley has provided education about Southern peas and Dr. Eddie Millhollon gave tours and information about his wetlands research.

Dr. Peterson has worked in collaboration with Mary Ann Van Osdell, Communications Specialist in youth programs. Grace has arranged for Ms. Van Osdell to provide education and hands-on experience in the areas of writing, preparing for interviews, and photography.

Dr. Peterson works with agents from around the state on the FNP Gardening Evaluation Committee headed by Dr. Melissa Cater. This group has met several times to create a strategy for the evaluation of school gardens.

Dr. Peterson also works with regional FCS agents in the planning and presentation of annual FCS expos. The first one was held in September 2010.

Dr. Peterson keeps herself informed of arising opportunities to work collaboratively with other faculty. Her planning, both short and long term, always involves time and energy to create a strong foundation of teamwork.

9. External Funding, Material Support & Grants

Dr. Peterson seeks to make her projects sustainable for long term goals and wide community impact by seeking support from other sources, both material and financial. Dr. Peterson believes that in our changing economic climate a broad and innovative range of support needs to be discovered and encouraged.

Grace has obtained funding from the following sources:

FNP Volunteer Match Funding:

The FNP volunteer training program managed by Dr. Peterson brings FNP funding into the AgCenter through matched funding for volunteer hours reported by the program participants. Volunteer hours are matched with federal funds at the rate of \$15.44 per hour. Part of the requirement for volunteer training certification is the contribution of volunteer time toward community gardening projects. This has not only been an opportunity to increase volunteer experience and a measure of program effectiveness, it has been a supporting contribution to the AgCenter Programming through the FNP volunteer match funding.

2008-2009	664 hours pledged, 1,495 hours reported	\$23,083
2009-2010	3,291 hours pledged, 3,701 hours reported	\$57,143
2010-2011	3, 518 hours pledged, 2700 hours reported	\$41,688 as of July 1, 2011

Northwest Louisiana Master Gardeners:

The Northwest Louisiana Master Gardeners have adopted the Community Garden Project as a volunteer opportunity for their members, as one way to complete the annual 20 hour volunteer requirement. They have given material support in the form of transplants, soil, and tools, and they give the project a generous budget each year with unrestricted funds.

2009-2010	\$4,000
2010-2011	\$4,200
2011-2012	\$5,500

Other external funding, material support, and grants:

Monetary Support:

- \$5,000 Grow Your Park Grant from the National Recreation and Park Association in collaboration with Shreveport Public Assembly and Recreation (SPAR) to provide resources to expand edible/community garden programming for children. 7/01/2010 - 12/01/2011
- \$3,000 Youth Gardening Grant from General Motors in collaboration with SPAR to expand the garden-based nutrition education program at Valencia Park Community Center. 04/01/2011-03/30/2012
- \$1,000 Community Grants from Northwest Louisiana Master Gardeners in collaboration with Ruby Scroggins, Principal, West Shreveport Elementary School to purchase materials needed for the installation of a school-based community garden. 12/15/2010 - 12/14/2011

In-kind Support:

- Tools, equipment, and volunteer hours from Lowe's Home Centers Incorporated, Mansfield Rd., Shreveport, LA
- Discounted vegetable and fruit plants from Lowe's Home Centers Incorporated, Youree Dr., Shreveport, LA
- Vegetable seeds donated by The Home Depot, Bert Kouns Dr. Shreveport, LA
- Strategic Web Design, LLC donated Website design and ongoing website maintenance.

Volunteer Support from Other Organizations:

- Over 200 volunteer hours from the Alliance for Community Development, a youth service learning organization.
- Over 200 volunteer hours from ShreveCORPS, a youth service-learning organization managed by Shreveport Green.
- Over 60 volunteer hours from Centenary College students through their service-learning program.

10. Presentations at Professional & Clientele Targeted Conferences

Grace Peterson believes that presentations at conferences are an excellent way to inform peer professionals and to educate the general public about the activities, programs and resources of the LSU AgCenter.

- Greater New Orleans Master Gardener Winter Symposium. *Community Gardens: Where We Grow Together*. New Orleans, LA. January 16, 2010
- Market Gardens: The Basics. Facilitated panel discussion with local produce buyers. Shreveport, LA. March 6, 2010
- Louisiana Master Gardener State Convention. *Community Gardens: Where We Grow Together*. West Monroe, LA. April 30, 2010
- Arkansas Master Gardener State Convention. *Community Gardens: Where We Grow Together*. Magnolia, AR. May 21, 2010
- Community Food Security Coalition Annual National Conference. Co-presenter. *Vision-centered Collaboration*. New Orleans, LA. October 2010.
- Society for Nutrition Education Annual National Conference. Co-presenter. *Digging out of the Obesity Epidemic: Garden-Based Nutrition Education*. Kansas City, MO. July 25, 2011
- Society for Nutrition Education Annual National Conference. Co-presenter. *Using Social Media and Technology to Engage, Inspire and Educate Youth*. Kansas City, MO. July 26, 2011.

11. Participation in and Leadership of Professional Organizations/Committees

Dr. Peterson actively participates in professional organizations and committees as way to increase public knowledge about AgCenter programs and resources, build collaborative partnerships, and increase her own knowledge about other initiatives and programs.

- American Community Gardening Association, Member 2007 – present
- Epsilon Sigma Phi, Member 2009-present
- Community Food Security Coalition, Member 2010-present
- National Extension Association of Family & Consumer Sciences, Member 2011
- Louisiana Extension Association of Family & Consumer Sciences, Member 2011

12. Continued Coursework, In-service Training, Sabbaticals and Professional Improvement

Grace Peterson actively seeks to improve the services and programs that she offers through trainings, coursework, and professional development. She plans to become a resource for AgCenter faculty and other professional peers through specialization in Program Development and Evaluation.

Professional Improvement and In-Service Training:

- FCS Nutrition Team Meetings. 2007-present.
- Nutrition ACE Meetings. 2007-present.
- Regional FCS Meetings. 2009-present.
- FCS Annual Conferences. 2008-present.
- FNP Annual Meetings. Bossier City, LA. 2007, 2008, 2009.
- Northwest Region Annual Meetings. Bossier City, LA. 2008, 2009, 2010.
- LSU AgCenter Annual Conference. Baton Rouge, LA. December 2007 and 2008.
- Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (SSAWG) Annual Conference, Louisville, KY. January 2008.
- Engaging, Mobilizing and Impacting Faith Based Communities. Distance Education. August 2008.
- Community Food Security Coalition National Annual Conference. Cherry Hill, NJ. October 2008.
- National Community Development Association Southwest Chapter Meeting. Shreveport, LA. October 2008.
- Food Safety Training for Community Gardeners. Shreveport, LA. November 2008.
- World of Gardening Series: Organic Gardening. Shreveport, LA. November 2008.
- Personal Leadership Workshop. Woodworth, LA. January 2009.
- Sustainable Communities Webinar. Shreveport, LA. February 2009.
- Gardening Seminar. Shreveport, LA. April 2009.
- Service Learning at LSUS. Shreveport, LA. April 2009.
- Grant Writing Workshop. Baton Rouge, LA. June 2009.
- Community Food Security Coalition National Annual Conference. Des Moines, IA. October 2009.
- Home Vegetable Gardening. Calhoun, LA. November 2009.
- Social and Economic Stability ACE Meeting. Distance Ed. December 2009.
- Shreveport/Caddo Master Planning Meetings. Shreveport, LA. 2007 – present
- FNP EARS Training. Bossier City, LA. January 2010.
- Strategic Doing Workshop. Shreveport, LA. January 2010.
- Garnering Grants in the County. Webinar - University of Florida Extension. January 2010.
- Edible Landscapes. Shreveport, LA. March 2010.

- School Garden Workshop. Bossier City, LA. April 2010.
- World of Gardening Series: Building Healthy Soil. Shreveport, LA. May 2010.
- Evaluation Training. Bossier City, LA. August 2010.
- Outlook 2010: Best Practices. Bossier City, LA. September 2010.
- Brownfields and Urban Ag: Part I and Part II. Webinar by EPA. September and October 2010.
- Entomology Training for Gardeners. Webinar. September 2010.
- Community Food Security Coalition National Annual Conference. New Orleans, LA. October 2010.
 - Pre-conference short course: Field Guide for Evaluation-Intensive Training – focus on outcome based evaluation strategies, tools, and analysis.
- Community and Youth Gardening eXtension. Webinar. January 2011.
- Working Toward a Community Garden-Friendly City: Strategies and Lessons Learned. American Community Garden Association Teleconference. January 2011.

Following a course of study designed in cooperation with faculty advisor, Dr. Melissa Cater, Dr. Peterson has completed six hours of the 15 hours required for specialization. Two of the planned future courses will be independent study to focus on the needs of her target community and other professional collaborators.

Coursework:

- Program Development, HRE 7122
- Program Evaluation, HRE 7622
- Sustainable and Organic Horticulture, HORT 3503
- Scientific Methods in Human Resource Education, HRE 7901
- Independent Study in Advanced Program Development, HRE 7801 (in progress)

13. Participation in Public Policy and Community Issues

Grace Peterson firmly believes that sustainable change in the well-being of her target population must involve education of our policy makers and changes in the policies that affect our food system and our neighborhoods. All of her programs, presentations and collaborations aim at an integrated approach that involves every level of community involvement, from neighborhood youth to elected officials.

Dr. Peterson took timely advantage of a unique opportunity as our city collectively framed and created a comprehensive Master Plan for the next 20 years. By participating in public discussions, meeting with policy makers, and taking an active leadership role in relevant committees, she was able to help establish written goals for a Healthy Local Food System and access to healthy food.

She has also been appointed to the Caddo Parish Green Economy Taskforce. Through her participation, she is advocating for the development of a Healthy Local Food System for the parish.

Grace Peterson has helped to build bridges of communication between different public agencies, businesses, and neighborhood groups to facilitate a network of coordinated plans and initiatives.

14. Awards and Recognition

Grace Peterson has received several awards and frequent public recognition as an indication of the importance of her program's contribution to the needs of our community.

- Denver T. & Ferne Loupe Extension Team Award. LSU AgCenter. December 2008.
- Caring Neighbor Award. Community Renewal International. November 2008.

- Community Advisory Group. Shreveport/Caddo Vision 20/20 Master Plan. June 2009.
- Recognition of Service Award. St. Catherine/Cedar Grove Community Garden of Dreams. October 2009.
- HERA Award. Shreveport's Mayor Glover and the Mayor's Women's Council. November 2010.
- Caddo Parish Green Economy Taskforce. Caddo Parish Commissioners. January 2011.

15. Multi-Institution, Agency and State Collaboration

Many of Dr. Peterson's programs have involved collaborations with other agencies and institutions. She believes that the coordination of the resources of different organizations provides the maximum benefit for her target populations.

Dr. Peterson has initiated and maintained many institutional and agency collaborations in order to increase public awareness, create new opportunities, and gather support for her programming. The outcome of these collaborations has benefited both the AgCenter and the collaborative partners. Mutual goals are found that stimulate the efficiency and creativity of program delivery.

Listed below are past and present institution, agency, and organization partners:

Northwest Louisiana Master Gardeners
 City of Shreveport Public Assembly and Recreation (SPAR)
 Slow Foods of North Louisiana
 Shreveport Green
 Alliance for Community Development
 Community Renewal International
 Volunteers of America
 Louisiana State University Shreveport
 Centenary College
 Bossier Parish Community College
 Community Oriented Policing
 Bossier Council on Aging
 Various Neighborhood Associations
 Montessori School for Shreveport
 Shreveport Metropolitan Planning Commission
 Byrd High School
 Caddo Career and Technology Center
 Sci-Port
 Boy Scout Troop 9
 YMCA Camp Forbing
 North Louisiana Economic Development Foundation
 Various local churches.
 Childhood Obesity Council
 Caddo Council on Aging
 Fit City Challenge
 The Year of the Healthy Child

16. Service Activities

Dr. Peterson believes that service is not only an activity that benefits others, but an underlying principle to guide life choices. Service, as a principle, can enhance every aspect of life.

Organizations Advised

Dr. Peterson has advised the Red River Coalition of Community Gardeners as they formed their organization, created a Board of Directors, wrote a mission and vision statement, and applied for 501(c)3 status. She provides educational programming and leadership development to the organization.

She has also advised the Northwest Louisiana Master Gardener Community Grant Committee on matters related to the funding of school and community garden grant applications.

Dr. Peterson has participated in a leadership capacity with the YWCA.

She has advised and consulted with the Grace Home, an organization which provides transitional housing for people with addictions.

University Service

- Planning and presentation of exhibits at the Louisiana State Fair (2008-present)
- Planning and presentation of exhibits at the AgMagic (2009-present)
- Planning and presentation of exhibits at the Regional FCS Expo (September 2010 and November 2011-planned)
- Manned the LSU AgCenter booth at the Statewide Police Jury Convention. February 2011.
- Designed and presented a Youth and Community Gardening exhibit at the Legislative Fete. Baton Rouge, LA. June 2010.

Professional Service

Dr. Peterson has shared essential information with other AgCenter staff who are beginning garden based nutrition education programs in their own regions. Providing such mentoring and resources is a contribution to the development of AgCenter initiatives in these areas.

She has provided guidance and mentoring for Stephanie Hansen, a student worker pursuing a degree in Biology from Centenary College. In addition to teaching Ms. Hansen current knowledge in the field and hands-on experience, Dr. Peterson encourages self-reliance, creativity, and autonomy.

Other External & Community Service

Dr. Peterson helped in the fundraising efforts that enabled Caddo Magnet theater students, including her son Roger, to go to Scotland for a once in a lifetime educational experience at the internationally acclaimed Fringe Theatrical event.

She also supports youth clientele outside of scheduled programming by attending their sporting events.