



Summer Institute in Program Evaluation: June 3 – 7, 2013

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Case Study Submission

Organization: Food Matters Manitoba/Four Arrows Regional Health Authority (Byron/Kayla), First Nations Inuit Health Branch (Leon)

Program Name: Manitoba First Nations Chicken Projects

Reason for evaluation:

Briefly explain why you are evaluating this program (intended audience and use).

Manitoba First Nations Chicken Projects have a variety of funders, all of whom require and encourage some level of evaluation in the programs they fund. This evaluation would be useful for demonstrating the benefits of the project to our funders.

There has been some resistance to establishing northern poultry projects, due to past evaluations which emphasized the high costs. We are hoping to achieve a more holistic picture of the costs and impacts of these projects in order to change that view.

Though there have been other northern poultry projects in the past, our current projects are still relatively new and we can still learn a great deal about how to most effectively support small-scale chicken raisers. Our initial experiences have also raised some questions about the long term economic and environmental sustainability of Northern chicken raising. As we are looking for ways to create programming that responds to the needs and interests of Northern communities in a way that moves towards long-term sustainability and greater self-reliance for members, it is important for us to better understand these issues.

There is a lot of room for this program to grow and expand to more First Nations' and Northern communities. Many other communities are interested in raising chickens and an in depth evaluation would help us determine how to most effectively extend support and, if appropriate, communicate these plans for expansion to funders.

Program Description:

Provide background information on your program and/or organization.

Food Matters Manitoba is a non-profit organization which engages Manitobans toward healthy, fair and sustainable food for all. We value and work towards healthy communities, access to nutritious food for all and an economically viable, diverse, and ecologically sustainable food system in urban, rural and northern Manitoba.

The Four Arrows Regional Health Authority Inc. has been given the responsibility by the four Chiefs of the Island Lake Tribal Council Inc. to; "Attend to all matters that affect and support the health conditions and services of the four Island Lake communities".





The following Mission Statement was adopted by the Four Arrows Regional Health Authority Board in October of 2003:

As a regional organization created and governed by the four Island Lake First Nations and working cooperatively with their community health services, we strive to improve health conditions and health services in Island Lake.

The Chicken Program began in the Island Lake First Nations of Garden Hill, St. Theresa Point, and Wasagamack with the support of Four Arrows RHA, in 2010. Red Sucker Lake started a year later. As mentioned previously, this was not the first time an organization had supported Northern Communities with starting a chicken raising program however at the time there were none in operation. Two years later, while attending a FMM conference, a Cross Lake resident attended a presentation about the Island Lake chicken program and the stories of chickens being raised in the Island Lake First Nations. When she returned home she found a group of interested chicken raisers within the community, approached FMM for support and the Cross Lake Chicken Club was born.

Using funding from various partners, these projects have enabled families in these communities to raise chickens over the past three summers. Chicken raisers were provided with training, chicks, and supplies for feeding and watering the birds and keeping them warm. In some cases, chicken raisers were also provided with supplies to build coops for their chickens. Throughout the process, they were provided with resources, training and information on care and slaughter by experts visiting the communities, and ongoing support from the partner organizations. While none of the participants had raised chickens before, most were thrilled with the experience of chicken raising and described many benefits from food to exercise to social connections. As a result of this success, each year new families have been interested in participating in the program.

These are also the first poultry projects which FMM and Four Arrows have directly facilitated, and a great deal has been learned in the process. Raising chickens in the North presents several unique challenges such as limited access to feed sources, high shipping costs of feed and other equipment from the south and few places for proper storage. This year the Cross Lake Chicken Club has received a small grant from MAFRA to explore ways to address these challenges and increase the longevity and sustainability of raising chickens in the community.

Program Goal:

What is the program's overall aim?

To build food skills and self-sufficiency, based on the agricultural history of communities, in order to increase food security.

Program Objectives:

If you have a logic model – attach and refer to the logic model. If not, please state the short and long term objectives of your program. Objectives should indicate a desired change. In other words, they are not activities or products but the intended outcome of your activities on the target audience.

- To increase the amount of livestock in communities
- To increase the ability of the community to produce their own food





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- To increase awareness and knowledge of how to raise and slaughter livestock and prepare food.
- To increase access to nutritious and affordable food.
- To connect people with the histories of animal husbandry in their communities.
- To help build capacity, skills and self-reliance.
- To teach children and youth about where food comes from, and how to respect and care for the animals that feed us.
- To create potential for community economic development through small-scale chicken production.
- To build community and strengthen individual well-being.

Target Audience:

- The communities which are participating in the project
- Program Funders
- Program support agencies

Key activities:

Describe the primary activities carried out to achieve your objectives

Specifics of how activities have been carried out has varied in the different communities. In general, each season has involved

- Connecting with community members who are interested in participating
- Providing materials for building chicken coops (in Cross Lake and in year 2 of the Island Lake project)
- Providing 'Chicken 101', initial training and resources on how to build coops and take care of chickens
- Providing chicks (both meat birds and layers) to the chicken raisers
- Providing feed and equipment such as feeders, water dishes, heat lamps and bedding
- Visits by chicken experts to provide on-site support for care and training on how to slaughter the chickens
- Post-season visit to meet with chicken raisers and evaluate the program

Data Collection:

If you are currently collecting any information about your program on a regular basis, please describe.

Last year FMM did surveys with the chicken raisers to use in evaluating the project, and held a focus group with the chicken raisers to get their feedback. No other official data has been collected, though we receive ongoing, informal, qualitative data through our communications with the chicken raisers throughout the project.

Four Arrows has produced a video documenting the first 2 years of the project.

Evaluation Questions





What would you like the evaluation to tell you (what do you want to know as a result of the evaluation)?

- How effective has the program been so far?
- Have certain strategies (eg; providing all of the supplies for building coops vs. leaving that up to the raisers) been more or less effective than others?
- Is it sustainable?
- What are the benefits (food related but also aside from food)? How can we quantify or better demonstrate these benefits to funders/supporters?
- Is this project helping people in the community lead healthier lifestyles?
- What are the major challenges?
- Concrete numbers (how many chickens? How many eggs? How much money (spent/saved)?)
- What have people learned as a result? Has this knowledge been shared?
- Are new chicken raisers accessing the knowledge of more experienced raisers?
- How transferable is this project? Could it be used in other communities?
- Do second year chicken raisers feel they are moving towards greater self-reliance in their poultry production than in their first year? Do they eventually envision being able to raise chickens without program support? If not, what are the barriers?
- How can our organizations better support/smooth the process for the chicken raisers? What is missing from our current training?

Implementation Plan

Please describe how you plan to implement the evaluation framework once it is developed.

Somewhat depends on what the framework is? FMM staff will use the evaluation framework to conduct an evaluation of the program and use the results to report to our funders and improve the program.

Contact Information

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