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2-25-2010

Interview with David Beller, Mercy Corp NW, 2010 (audio)

David Beller

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INTERVIEW INDEX:

Interviewee: David Beller

Interviewer: Kyle Koonce

Date: 2/25/10

Location of Interview: MercyCorp Office, NW Naito Parkway, Portland, OR

Research Assistant: Dan Stillinger

Interview Series: Sustaining Northwest Landscapes & Communities

Recording Equipment: Digital Recorder (Windows Media Audio Files) With an External Omni directional Microphone

Time:	Notes:
0-1m	Intro, Name, Date, Location, Group, Introduce Interviewee
1m-2m	Interviewee Biography, employment position, background
1m-2m	<i>“What is MercyCorp all about?”</i> “Helping limited income entrepreneurs improve their lives and economic standing through sustainable agriculture.”
3m	“We’re hoping to start working with African refugees”
4m	<i>“How do you acquire the plots of land?”</i>
5m	“English language skills restrict the progress of refugees and the potential for their economic situations.”
8m	“We have great success with farmers markets and community supported agriculture (CSA) programs as a distribution outlet.”
9m	<i>“What kinds of costs are associated with the project?”</i>
9m	“Local funding, but mostly from federal grants”
11m	“It is difficult to leverage and organize tax breaks”
12m	<i>“Diggable Cities -> viable for land acquisition?”</i>
13m	“The city has a lot of unused land, but often has plans for it years down the line”
14m	“There are a lot of bureaucratic barriers to our progress”
16m	“Our practices are required to be organic”
16m	“We try to maximize the flavor and quality of our products”
18m	<i>“How do you promote your projects?”</i> “Urban farming can be empowering to those who want to, but don’t have access to farming”

- 18m ***“How do you find participants?”***
 “Various groups that recommend potential refugee farmers – difficulty building connections and acquiring land grants.”
- 20m ***“What do you see as the biggest future challenge?”***
 “Making income to suit our marketing issues.”
- 21m “We are exploring a centralized marketing system, and designing a new product distribution organization.”
- 22m “High costs to ensure good water sources and reduce soil toxicity.”