

7-29-2009

## Interview with Sarah Patterson, Lettuce Grow Garden Foundation, 2009 (audio)

Sarah Patterson

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### Recommended Citation

Patterson, Sarah, "Interview with Sarah Patterson, Lettuce Grow Garden Foundation, 2009 (audio)" (2009). *All Sustainability History Project Oral Histories*. 67.

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Interview Index-  
Sarah Patterson- Lettuce Grow Foundation  
By Diane Mahon

Part one      Introduction information

**0:09 What can you tell me about the Lettuce Grow Foundation?**

Beginning- idea was started by an inmate that had taken a sustainability class at Portland State University

0:30 Food Fantasies being the inspiration for the idea

0:47 Kicking the can with the idea every 2 weeks

1:00 Foundations that Contributed

1:22 Coordinating with Coffee Creek Prison

1:30 August- September, Organic Farmers 5 year plan

2:05 Soliciting Security Badge volunteers

2:55 Supplies donated

3:37 Work assignment for inmates

3:50 Nutrition in the prison- kitchen staff serving 3000 meals a day

4:00 Adding inmates to the work assignment one at a time with the volunteers

4:45 Dynamic with the kitchen staff

5:40 Vocational Training

5:50 Certification

6:00 Nutritional Education

6:21 Her Phone Rings

Part 2

0:13 What the inmates can take back to their families

0:25 Organic Certification- Everything is grown Organic

1:15 Pause in Tape

**1:31 What is your Definition of Sustainability**

1:39 Sustainability is really 2 questions

    What are you teaching?

    Can you maintain it?

1:55 501 CB Certification- Fund Raising and Grant Writing Goals

2:26 Brought in wildlife to the prison that was never there before

2:45 Broaden the footprint of the Project

2:54 "Seed to Table"

2 Volunteers teach the class with in the prison

Teaching is done in the garden, not a class room

3:17 Security risks inside the prison

4 inmates working the garden right now

So many of the inmates don't have something to do

**4:00 How Are those 4 chosen?**

They Apply for it

**Why stick only with minimum security inmates instead of medium**

**4:22 security inmates for the garden work?**

Be successful in the start

operational issues

expanding is a future goal, but security issues take priority

**5:40 How much of the food is actually making it to the prison kitchen?**

Not much at this time

Beginning of the harvest season

Got started quickly and didn't consult with the kitchen as to what they actually needed/wanted so what they were given was what WE thought they would need

6:34 Mark B. - Organic Farmer

"If they were only growing Iceburg lettuce they would still be getting the education and skills"

**7:00 What is planted?**

Lettuce, Beans and a list is on the website

**(In reference to Benefits of the Garden) What is the most important thing**

**7:22 your teaching them?**

Gardening skills, Chemistry of Organic Gardening

Teamwork

Management

Interpersonal skills- many inmates have never had jobs

Volunteers have played a major role,

**8:14 The education- is it in the field or a Classroom?**

In the field, in the garden

**(Referring to the Volunteers working with the inmates) Are there security**

**8:20 issues working side by side?**

No- they are grateful to have someone else to talk to.

**8:55 Tools to bring in?**

Land was tilled for them

Staff does a lot of the work

20 yards of compost was donated

9:39 Failed previous growing project

Had the tools and they were retained.

10:40 Donated Compost

Outside sources

10:50 Nicolas Seed

11:05 Concentrates, seeds Donated from places in Portland

11:30 Compost from Fall Leaves

**12:05 Does the prison use a compost pile on it's own?**

It's a goal to have the prison use a compost pile

They had no recycling at one point

12:58 Compost Machine

Earth Advantage

So complicated that no one could run it

14:13 Sarah makes a reference to her housing building

Composting took the garbage collection by Half

13:35 Getting the Machine up?

Could be a staff of work program, but it's unclear yet

16:35 Future plans for partnerships

Phenix Rising, Mercy Corps, Tilth

**17:25 Have you talked to those who worked in the garden and gotten out?**

No, it's only started in Feb.

3 year or less sentences on the inmates, hopefully will stagger the release of people coming and going into the program.