

“Seeds of Security”

Proposed USVI Agricultural Education Program



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

“Seeds of Security” Concept

The proposed “Seeds of Security” program fulfills the tenets of the VI Agricultural Plan’s mandate for PreK-12 agricultural education. In order to support food security/sovereignty in the territory, it is critical that agricultural education begins at a young age and is incorporated into core subjects. The aim is to educate, engage, ignite passion & build awareness of the our direct connection to food sources and how that fits into the broader issues of battling global warming, embracing sustainable initiatives & environmental justice.

Inspire the next generation of GREEN Agricultural LEADERS!



Highlights of “Seeds of Security”

- USVI Pilot Program: Two schools per island, six schools in total
- Experiential learning: age-appropriate curriculum, team work, engaging activities & project work. In classroom & extracurricular clubs
- Incorporate best practices from top green/ag programs: USDA’s Ag in the Classroom (AITC); P.E.A.C.E. International LLC; Green Academy UNESCO; Green Camp, Bali; EPA’s “Kiddle” materials, etc.



Highlights of “Seeds of Security”

- Grow container gardens with variety of produce seeds/seedlings: 4-5 grow bags per student, hands-on instruction
- Provision of school hydroponics or aquaponics system in each school
- Teach reduction of food waste/intro to composting; start school compost pile/container
- Core curriculum concepts in humanities, nutrition, STEM including teaching irrigation, chemistry of soil, organic fertilizer , etc



Highlights of “Seeds of Security”

- Badges/rewards for completing initiatives
- Competitions to celebrate success, share innovations and motivate i.e. biggest crop, best essays, songs, arts, STEM-related projects, “green bee,” etc.
- Help develop cafeteria lunch menu items incorporating Seeds of Security “crops”
- Sell excess through school marketplaces; help make program self-sufficient



Highlights of “Seeds of Security”

- Create opportunity similar to UN Food and Agriculture Organization’s “Global Chef Challenge” / Create cookbook
- Track & record detailed metrics as part of the scientific education process and to track success of program
- Field trips to local farms/green markets



Highlights of “Seeds of Security”

- Guest speakers from UVI, various government offices (agriculture, energy, etc.) & elsewhere
- Introduction to “AI for Good” technology and the vital role tech advancements play
- Youth encouraged & rewarded for spreading what they learn to family, classmates & community in person & via social media: **Green Advocacy**



“Seeds of Security” Taking Root

- Hire Director of Sustainability
 - Assess existing curriculum & lead creation of custom programming
 - Incorporate into existing curriculum to reduce red tape and deliver results
 - Train the teacher workshops
 - Oversee “Seeds of Security” six-school pilot program
- Hire full-time Coordinator to handle logistics, provisioning, admin functions
- Assignment of Individual School Coordinators (one at each school – SIX)
 - Existing staff members who receive stipend
 - With help of DS, oversee programming at each school



“Seeds of Security” Taking Root

- Slated for Oct 2023 launch, to include event/photo opp for teachers & students with Commissioners, Governor, Senators, Stacey Plaskett, etc.
- Awareness campaign in USVI, highlighting achievements via newsletter & media/social outreach, etc.
- Following Pilot Program, hold awards ceremony; celebrate students & STEAM program success (May 2024)
- With data & success, expand throughout USVI territory



“Seeds of Security” Funding

Allotted funding from Education Initiative Fund provided in Act 8700 (\$500K) to establish PreK-12 Pilot Program including the following:

- Salaries for positions as noted
- Benefits for positions as noted
- Stipends for teachers as noted
- Aquaponics systems
- Grow Bags
- Soil/Seeds/Fertilizer
- Pest Control/Organic Pesticides
- Teacher Supplies/Classroom Materials
- Composting Equipment
- Computer/Printer
- Office Supplies
- Signage
- Monthly Newsletter
- Social Media
- Awards/Ceremonies Expenses
- Travel by VIDE/Teachers/Students
- Field Trip Expenses
- Miscellaneous

“Seeds of Security”

**“To nurture a garden is to feed not just the body
but the soul.” – Poet Alfred Austin**



Nurture our children while growing USVI's food sovereignty.