

“I Don’t Know How to Express It But I Love It”: Participatory Photography in an Urban Refugee Gardening Program

*Society for Applied Anthropology 2011
Seattle, WA*

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In order to create opportunities for refugee populations to produce culturally appropriate foods, connect with their heritage and integrate into their new communities, a coalition of refugee assistance agencies in Massachusetts implemented an urban gardening program called “Gardening through Refugee Organizations” (GRO). The project offered a unique opportunity to use visual data to facilitate community participation in program evaluation and dissemination. Through photographs and photo-elicited group interviews, this paper explores the multiple effects of GRO on cultural continuity, family dynamics, inter/intra-cultural relations and nutrition. The utility of visual methods for overcoming language barriers and discovering less-tangible outcomes is emphasized.