

**Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)
Final Performance Report**

The final performance report summarizes the outcome of your FMPP award objectives. As stated in the FMPP Terms and Conditions, you will not be eligible for future FMPP or Local Food Promotion Program grant funding unless all close-out procedures are completed, including satisfactory submission of this final performance report.

This final report will be made available to the public once it is approved by FMPP staff. Write the report in a way that promotes your project's accomplishments, as this document will serve as not only a learning tool, but a promotional tool to support local and regional food programs. Particularly, recipients are expected to provide both qualitative and quantitative results to convey the activities and accomplishments of the work.

The report is limited to 10 pages and is due **within 90 days** of the project's performance period end date, or sooner if the project is complete. Provide answers to each question, or answer "not applicable" where necessary. It is recommended that you email or fax your completed performance report to FMPP staff to avoid delays:

FMPP Phone: 202-690-4152; Email: USDAFMPPQuestions@ams.usda.gov; Fax: 202-690-4152

Should you need to mail your documents via hard copy, contact FMPP staff to obtain mailing instructions.

Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	April 1, 2016 – September 30, 2016
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Recipient Organization Name:	Florida A & M University
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Building the Consumer Base: Supporting the Farmers Market Solution to Food Deserts
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-FMPPX-FL-0045-199
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Tallahassee, FL
Total Awarded Budget:	\$96,700

FMPP staff may contact you to follow up for long-term success stories. Who may we contact?

- Same Authorized Representative listed above (check if applicable).
 Different individual: Name: _____; Email: _____; Phone: _____

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1. State the goals/objectives of your project as outlined in the grant narrative and/or approved by FMPP staff. If the goals/objectives from the narrative have changed from the grant narrative, please highlight those changes (e.g. “new objective”, “new contact”, “new consultant”, etc.). You may add additional goals/objectives if necessary. For each item below, qualitatively discuss the progress made and indicate the impact on the community, if any.

- i. **Goal 1/Objective 1: Recruit and train 10 researchers from resident populations of Tallahassee public housing developments**

- a. Progress Made: Goal/objective was accomplished. Ten researchers from the resident populations of all three target communities were recruited and trained as researchers on the project. The recruits received training in research methods, participant observation, time management, and group dynamics. Once trained, the resident researchers were paired with graduate students (FAMU Institute of Public Health) to solicit interview participants and conduct the interviews. Three of the resident researchers participated in the second phase of research, pairing again with graduate students and with senior project staff to recruit participants and conduct the field tests. The resident researchers provided analysis of the interventions they participated in as well.

- b. Impact on Community: All ten recruits indicated gaining value from the training, ranging from self-confidence to skills applicable in the workplace. Some peripheral exposure and activity occurred for several of the women (all recruits were women, by far the greatest gender representation among adults in the public housing communities) as a result of being involved in the project. One woman was recruited by American Heart Association to participate in a public service announcement for their Healthy Food Financing Initiative in the Florida Legislature. She also appeared in a local newspaper article about the challenges of feeding a family of four healthy food on a budget. Resident researchers expressed appreciation for the opportunity to perform outreach in their communities, talking with neighbors they might not have otherwise approached and engaging families in conversations about nutrition. The women liked being involved in something positive, and by being involved, promoting positive concepts in their communities. Another of the researchers stated, “I was pleasantly surprised at how open and willing [neighbors] were to talk to me and receive the information we had to offer...I feel that this was a great experience and exposed me to greater knowledge of food and nutrition, as well as the views and nutritional habits of others.”

- ii. **Goal 1/Objective 2: Conduct qualitative research that examines target audience consumption behaviors and purchase motivations**

- a. Progress Made: The research team, which included contracted staff, applicant faculty, student researchers and residents of research locations recruited and trained as researchers, conducted qualitative research that consisted of in-person interviews at four research locations. The team transcribed, coded and analyzed the data, and produced a report of findings with recommendations for activities to take place under the second phase of research. Nine of thirteen advisory board members reviewed and approved the phase one research report, and participated in recommendation development and ranking.

- b. Impact on Community: The process of conducting the interviews imparted communication skill development – verbal, non-verbal, written – among the

resident researchers. Most community residents being interviewed were genuinely interested in the process, and expressed appreciation at having an opportunity to give voice to some of the obstacles they encounter when trying to nourish their families. Executives of social service agencies who sat on the advisory board were able to use information gleaned in the interview process to adapt programming and/or information to better meet community needs.

iii. **Goal 1/Objective 3: Conduct mixed-method research that determines the effectiveness of strategies to engage the target audience with fresh food consumption**

a. Progress Made: The research team developed a design plan for the second phase of research based on the first phase findings. Nine of thirteen advisory board members approved the research design for the second phase. Five of the advisory board members participated in a kick-off event for the second phase of research that included interventions based on themes identified in the interviews. The field tests of interventions actually took place during two separate seasons of the farmers market, and at four separate locations (three resident communities and the market itself). The initial set of field tests (fall 2015) were segmented by community, applied according to data from the first phase of qualitative study. Interventions tested during the spring deleted procedures that had demonstrated no impact, amplified the intervention that showed result (nutrition workshops), and further tested central concepts by applying the same series of interventions in the resident communities. The research methods included survey, participant observation, participant engagement and measurement, and pre-and post-testing.

b. Impact on Community: The most significant impact came from the workshops, which grew in attendance. Results show that personal connection improves motivation toward behavior change more so than financial or convenience incentives. In the second round of field testing, the workshops were again better attended than the shuttle; however, the workshop did prompt shuttle attendance, as the people who rode the shuttle had attended the workshop the previous week. The riders redeemed the coupons for fresh food consumption received as a result of participation in the workshop.

iv. **Goal 1/Objective 4: Produce and disseminate a report of findings to funding agency, collaborators and partner networks, as well as appropriate entities nationwide**

a. Progress Made: Both the Phase One report chronicling the interview process, findings, and recommendations, as well as the Phase Two report were (1) posted to the Frenchtown Farmers Market website, (2) shared through that entity's Facebook page, (3) posted to the National Good Food Network Food Hub list serve, and the list serve for Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future Food Policy Networks list serve, (4) and emailed to the local food policy workgroup, the local food partners Google group, the research team, and the project advisory board, which represents thirteen local social service and food work agencies. The work has also been distributed to new grant projects in the local area network that are working to develop food access and agricultural entrepreneurship projects, as well as a collective impact effort focused on maternal and child health.

b. Impact on Community: The farmers market staff has already implemented a number of the recommendations made by the report. Farmers market vendors have expressed support of and interest with the strategies. University students

are being engaged to carry out community workshops with interactive cooking components, nutrition information, and savings strategies. Further impact to the stakeholder communities will continue to be monitored and reported among the partner network.

- v. **Goal 2/Objective 1: Increase volume of low-resource/high-need consumer base of the Frenchtown Heritage Marketplace by 35%**
 - a. Progress Made: During the fall field tests, administered over a five-week period, SNAP-EBT distributions at the market rose 44% over the previous five-week period. SNAP-EBT distributions maintained that level during the eight-week spring field test session, rising another 5%, despite the market moving to a new location.
 - b. Impact on Community: The produce vendors at the farmers market garnered the highest average sales per market day. The vendors showing the highest sales during the fall field test period doubled their daily sales average during the spring field test period. Most spring customers were new to the market, and found the double-bucks opportunity even though the market had moved from its fall location.
- vi. **Goal 2/Objective 2: Increase knowledge of target audience by 25% in their post-intervention measure to support consumption of fresh produce and locally-produced food**
 - a. Progress Made: Target audience knowledge of (1) reasons for eating fresh, local produce increased 32%, (2) ways to keep fresh fruits and vegetables from spoiling increased 102%, (3) ways to make a favorite dish healthier increased 5% (but were already high in the pre-test), (4) the Fresh Access Bucks purchase incentive program increased 129%, and (5) the location of the farmers market increased by 126% in the post-intervention measure.
 - b. Impact on Community: The measure for likelihood of shopping at the Frenchtown Farmers Market recorded the most significant increase among those who noted they “Definitely Will” (+11%).

2. Quantify the overall impact of the project on the intended beneficiaries, if applicable, from the baseline date (the start of the award performance period, September 30, 2014). Include further explanation if necessary.

- i. Number of direct jobs created: 9
- ii. Number of jobs retained: 7
- iii. Number of indirect jobs created: 5
- iv. Number of markets expanded: 1
- v. Number of new markets established: 1
- vi. Market sales increased by \$30,000 and increased by 200% - the 2016 sales through the end of the grant period 9/30/2016, over the 2015 sales estimate (total sales were not recorded by market staff for the 2015 season).
- vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 16
 - a. Percent Increase: +128% over 2015 daily vendor average

3. Did you expand your customer base by reaching new populations such as new ethnic groups, additional low income/low access populations, new businesses, etc.? If so, how?
Yes. The market continues to attract new SNAP-eligible customers, and grow usage of the Fresh Access Bucks purchase incentive program. Of the 70 SNAP customers in the 2016 season (through

the end of the grant period), half of them report being new to the market. Program usage has resulted in \$1,406 in SNAP benefits distributed and \$1,332 incentives distributed. This is a 170% increase over the 2015 season total. The interventions – namely, the workshops – directly resulted in market traffic. Building on the work of the project and its findings, market staff continues to implement activity recommendations to attract this target group.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

- i. Who are your community partners? Sustainable Tallahassee, Staywell/Wellcare, Leon County Health Department, UF/IFAS Leon County Extension Office, Tallahassee Food Network (TFN), Frenchtown Neighborhood Improvement Association (FNIA), Tallahassee Housing Authority (THA), Orange Avenue United Tenants Association (OAUTA), Whole Child Leon, Neighborhood Medical Center, Leon County Office of Sustainability
- ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the FMPP project? Each partner has been integral in the project's ability to achieve the striking results the project has revealed by the research, as well as serving on the project advisory board as the voice of the community. Extension has been an important partner in educational program delivery as an intervention. Both TFN and FNIA have provided access to research sites and support with field test functions. THA and OAUTA have been important partners in target audience access and communication, as well as facilitation of research functions.
- iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMPP grant? Partners will continue to disseminate the research results, aid the market in implementation of the recommendations, expand outreach to the target communities, and ensure the model of inclusion that this project represents is replicated in future community work and research.

5. Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the FMPP project?

The research team is a combination of academic researchers, contracted professionals and community liaisons. The work of the contractors on the research team has been integral to its function and success. The contractors carried out the research design and administration alongside the academic members of the team. They also facilitated evaluation, cultural competency, and community integration functions.

6. Have you publicized any results yet?*

- i. If yes, how did you publicize the results?
By website link, through social media announcements, email announcements, list serves, and a small number of printed copies to the communities and resident researchers. The project was also presented at Florida State University Minority Education Mentoring Programs Meeting 2015 and 2016; the Leon County Sustainability Summit: "We're All at the Table Together" (2015); the Xavier University Health Inequities Conference (2015); and presentation made at the Food and Nutrition Conference at the University of South Carolina Consortium Meeting (2015).
- ii. To whom did you publicize the results?
 - a. Partner agencies of the market, and it's email list (200+ names)
 - b. Followers of the farmers market's Facebook page (1600+)
 - c. Johns Hopkins food policy list serve (unknown, but likely 10,000+)

- d. National Good Food Network food hub list serve (unknown but likely 10,000+)
- e. Research communities (1,000+)
- f. Researchers and project team (20)
- g. Conference audiences at FSU, Leon County, Xavier University, and University of South Carolina (1,000+)

iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? See above

*Send any publicity information (brochures, announcements, newsletters, etc.) electronically along with this report. Non-electronic promotional items should be digitally photographed and emailed with this report (do not send the actual item).

7. Have you collected any feedback from your community and additional stakeholders about your work? Yes, and market staff will continue to collect comments on disseminated information.
- i. If so, how did you collect the information? Researchers performed exit interviews with project participants, and also submitted journal entries.
 - ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?
 - a. "I saw how fresh and inexpensive the food options were...I think better food options would help people to do better all around." – Carrie Jackson, 646 Steele Drive, Tallahassee, FL
 - b. "I didn't go to the Frenchtown farmers market before I participated in this project...Now I cook leaner meats and less fried foods." – Lurine George, 605 Steele Drive, Tallahassee, FL
 - c. "Yeah! Let's hear it for participatory research!" – Shanna Ratner, Principal, Yellow Wood Associates, Inc, Innovators in Rural Community Economic Development

8. Budget Summary:

- i. As part of the FMPP closeout procedures, you are required to submit the SF-425 (Final Federal Financial Report). Check here if you have completed the SF-425 and are submitting it with this report:
- ii. Did the project generate any income? No
 - a. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award?

9. Lessons Learned:

- i. Summarize any lessons learned. They should draw on positive experiences (e.g. good ideas that improved project efficiency or saved money) and negative experiences (e.g. what did not go well and what needs to be changed).
Community-based participatory research is a powerful tool for revealing and assessing both major and nuanced behavioral motivations. It is also an effective tool to combat the critique of research projects that "take" from subject communities without giving back. Involving "subjects" as researchers leaves a lasting impression, imparts useful skills, and develops community advocates for behavior change. The method also builds rapport and credibility with target communities, and fosters peripheral benefits that include increased community connections and activity. It is a difficult method to apply for researchers accustomed to making a plan and executing it in a vacuum. The research plan will need to be constantly adapted, with evaluation of efficacy at multiple intermediate periods rather than only at a midpoint and end stage. It is much more

work, but the resulting richness of the data, findings, recommendations, and lasting impact on the target communities is well worth the additional effort.

- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:
Some elements of working in the target communities was not known until the work proceeded. These obstacles include the necessitation of door-to-door contact to reach the research subjects, and navigating the community-level politics of housing agencies, and both formal and informal tenant groups. Build time into the research plan to explore these elements of the target communities. Include residents on planning committees prior to project application, and on advisory boards throughout the project implementation.
- iii. Describe any lessons learned in the administration of the project that might be helpful for others who would want to implement a similar project:
When performing participatory research, the study environment is not a stagnant one. Many changes occurred that were out of the researchers' control – such as the market moving location and changing its name. Flexibility in the research plan and development of working communication channels with partners are essential to successful project outcome. The work, both the research objectives and the goals of the farmers market itself, is about mutual relationships and real connections with people. These methods are central to community-based participatory research.

10. Future Work:

- i. How will you continue the work of this project beyond the performance period? In other words, how will you parlay the results of your project's work to benefit future community goals and initiatives? Include information about community impact and outreach, anticipated increases in markets and/or sales, estimated number of jobs retained/created, and any other information you'd like to share about the future of your project.
The farmers market has already begun to implement the marketing recommendations made by the research team. They expect the consumer base to grow an additional 35% over the course of the 2017. They expect a similar increase in sales, and per person expenditure. Expanding the customer base will support the expansion of the vendor base, and increase local food jobs for farmers and food producers. They expect the vendor base to double by 2018. Member of the market staff were on the research project team, so they were able to implement some recommendations immediately, and plan for the implementation of others. The work has also been distributed to new grant projects in the local area network that are working to develop food access and agricultural entrepreneurship projects, as well as a collective impact effort focused on maternal and child health.
- ii. Do you have any recommendations for future activities and, if applicable, an outline of next steps or additional research that might advance the project goals?
 1. A few vendors stand out as sales leaders, making over \$200 per market. These vendors should be analyzed to determine if their sales are due to more product type, the high quality of their products, their reputation in the community, or some combination of these factors. The results could help other vendors to boost their sales.
 2. More involvement of area residents and youth in the research activities, including data collection and analysis, could present interesting perspectives for expanding the consumer base of farmers markets. Such efforts could support healthy eating and

physical activity, as well as home gardening efforts.

3. More interviews of males would be interesting, in order to prepare activities that are more inclusive. While we had some, male participants were a minority and their views may add pieces to the puzzle of augmenting market patronage. Recruitment of male residents and youth as part of the research team would also aid this effort.