

Farmers Market Promotion Program
Final Performance Report
For the Period of April 1, 2016 – December 15, 2016

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Recipient Name:	Louisville/Jefferson County Metro Government
Project Title:	Louisville Farmers Market Coordination, Access and Capacity Building Project
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Program Summary:

The Louisville Farmers Market Coordination, Access and Capacity Building Project was intended to build capacity among Louisville’s farmers’ market managers to strengthen overall market structures and expand the number of markets that accept SNAP/SFMNP payment by deploying equipment, recruiting volunteers and providing training to volunteers and market managers on promoting and managing SNAP/SFMNP participating at markets, to provide consumer education on purchasing within a budget, seasonality and other relevant topics, and to recruit additional farmers to sell at Louisville markets. This project has increased the number of markets accepting SNAP, raised capacity among volunteers and market managers to work together to share services and support SNAP/SFMNP payments, and resulted in the creation of a new farmers market in a Louisville food desert.

Goals and Objectives:

The Louisville Farmers Market Coordination, Access and Capacity-Building Project (“Project”) was designed to accomplish two goals. First, it was aimed at building capacity among Louisville’s farmers’ market managers to strengthen overall market structures and expand the number of Louisville farmers’ markets with full capacity to accept SNAP/SFMNP payment by deploying equipment, recruiting volunteers and providing training to volunteers and market managers on promoting and managing SNAP/SFMNP participation at markets. Second, it was designed to provide consumer education on purchasing within a budget, seasonality, and other related topics, and to attempt to recruit additional farmers to sell at Louisville farmers’ markets.

These efforts were intended to result in a stronger and more coordinated network of farmers' markets, a developed volunteer base to support market programs, broader access for low income individuals to fresh, local foods, and an increased capacity among all consumers to shop at farmers' markets.

Louisville/Jefferson County Metro Government, a consolidated local government organized under Kentucky Revised Statutes Chapter 67C ("LMG"), is committed to building a more resilient and robust local food economy, and has committed significant staff and funding resources to this end. LMG developed data on the regional economic impact of local food, and a strategy for expanding the local food economy. Enhanced coordination at farmers' markets and expanded opportunities to purchase local food using SNAP/ SFMNP are critical elements of the strategy.

In 2008, LMG commissioned a study titled "Building Louisville's Local Food Economy: Strategies for increasing Kentucky farm income through expanded food sales in Louisville" (the "2008 Study," see <http://www.louisvilleky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/8E78A7DB-1E06-4C79-AF18-81BF1A098F8B/0/FarmersMarketFeasibilityStudyFINAL.pdf>). The 2008 Study included a farmer-developed list of ranked strategies to help farmers sell more Kentucky-raised food to a variety of Louisville buyers. One popular strategy involved increased centralization of the farmers' market system with a focus on marketing. The 2008 Study calculated that a 20% increase in farm sales at farmers' markets through improved marketing could provide \$720,000 in direct economic benefit to farmers.

In 2013, LMG released a survey of demand for local food titled "The Louisville Local Demand Analysis" ("Demand Study," see <http://www.louisvilleky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/5BB2A01F-AB01-4596-9400-A10D283EB5D5/0/DemandStudyFullReportJan2013.pdf>). The Demand Study found that Louisville residents spend around \$100 million annually on local food, but are interested in purchasing an additional \$158 million. The Study also pointed out that though SNAP purchases at farmers' markets are not tracked at the local level, Kentucky saw a 77.6% increase in these purchases at farmers' markets between 2010 and 2011, mostly due to increase availability of EBT infrastructure. The Demand Study recommended strategies to increase the growth in farmers' market sales by providing more opportunities to use SNAP at markets and other fresh food retail outlets.

There are 21 Louisville farmers' markets. Most markets are located in fairly affluent areas of the community, though a number of smaller markets exist in less-affluent areas as demonstrated in Item 8 above. In 2013, only 3 of these markets accepted SNAP, and only 4 accepted SFMNP according to the USDA Food Environment Atlas. No Louisville markets are currently approved to accept WIC or WIC Cash, though efforts are being made to change this.

Prior to this Project, Louisville's farmers' market system was highly disconnected, with no central governing body or management infrastructure, and market managers achieved varying degrees of success in recruiting volunteers, vendors and customers. In preparation for applying for the FMPP grant that is the subject of this Report, LMG convened a group of 11 market managers to understand common challenges and needs, and found that most market managers identified volunteer recruitment, a lack of marketing, and unfamiliarity with or lack of sufficient staff/volunteer capacity to administer a SNAP payment program as challenges to expanded success. Market managers expressed for the first time an interest in working together with LMG to address these issues.

The "Farmers Market Promotion Program Grant Activities and Impacts" report prepared by the Farmers Market Coalition and Market Umbrella documented grantee success achieved from 2006-2011 through FMPP awards. In particular, projects that combined EBT deployment with technical support to market managers and education and outreach to low income individuals achieved a high rate of success in increasing sales at markets. Also, marketing efforts to raise awareness of the availability of EBT transfers at markets and efforts to reduce barriers to access resulted in additional success. These findings mirror conclusions documented in the Louisville's 2008 Study and the Demand Study that expanding capacity in the farmers' market system and creating more opportunity to use SNAP in particular at markets would result in increased economic benefit to farmers.

This Project was developed to build a stronger, more cooperative and inclusive network of farmers' markets in Louisville, with the effect of increasing overall sales at markets and creating direct farm impact for regional producers. Partnerships were developed to perform critical tasks as outlined herein, and the climate among market managers has never been more favorable for this work. However, without funding through the FMPP, this Project would not have been possible, as no other funding existed to support it within LMG or elsewhere. However, as a result of the USDA's investment, local funders have expressed interest in helping to continue the work that started through this Project, a group of five farmers market managers has expressed a strong interest in forming an association to coordinate and share resources, and LMG's Department of Public Health and Wellness has identified funding to support this work over the next growing season.

Activities:

Goal #1 – Object/Activity 1: Beth Nolte was hired as the Project Coordinator to support Project activities. Ms. Nolte provided a summary of her observations and lessons learned, as well as a status update on her last engagement with each farmers market in Louisville; this summary, is attached under **Tab A**.

Goal #1—Object/Activity 2: Ms. Nolte identified three (3) markets to support in developing capacity to accept SNAP benefits for all vendors, though as explained in her status report, she made numerous efforts to engage other markets in this work. The Bardstown Road Market, Bluegrass Market and Phoenix Hill/NULU Markets received targeted support over the first year of this Grant. The Bluegrass and Phoenix Hill/NULU markets are both in priority project areas as identified in LMG’s grant application. The Bardstown Road Market is not in a priority project area, but is served by one of a very few east-west crosstown bus lines that provides access from neighborhoods considered to be food deserts, and therefore has the potential to serve customers from a diverse geography who wish to purchase food using SNAP benefits.

Project plans were developed with each of these three (3) market managers. Each project plan consisted of the following steps:

1. Provide support for each market manager to receive equipment and register to process SNAP payments with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture.
2. Train market managers to manage SNAP payments.
3. Distribute tokens (purchased with Louisville Metro Government funds) to each market targeted for support.
4. Provide incidental and targeted support to ensure that each market can effectively process SNAP payments. Recruit volunteers as needed to provide assistance to market managers.
 - a. For the Phoenix Hill Market, Ms. Nolte recruited a volunteer to help process SNAP payments. This volunteer originally engaged in the work as part of a required internship for college credit, but remained active in the market.
 - b. For the Bardstown Road Market, Ms. Nolte successfully applied for a small grant through Chipotle to provide vouchers for children to shop at the farmers market.
 - c. For the Bluegrass Farmers Market, Ms. Nolte helped the market manager think through marketing challenges related to the lack of visibility of the market and its unusual location in the rear of a hospital parking lot. The location of the market was not conducive to area residents walking to the market, which ultimately contributed to the market’s failure as described in more detail below.
 - d. For the South Points Market, Ms. Nolte successfully developed the satellite concept to allow the Bardstown Road Market to provide administrative support for the market. She negotiated the relationship with Save-a-Lot that allowed the market to take place in the store’s parking lot. She recruited farmers to sell at the market, identified a market manager and developed the processes

Ms. Nolte worked with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture and Project partner Community Farm Alliance to coordinate a USDA SNAP sign-up meeting and farmers’ market manager training held at the Bon Air Branch of the Louisville Free Public Library in Louisville. Ten (10) market managers from Louisville and surrounding communities attended this training. The training covered board development, vendor support and marketing, and featured information about registering a farmers market to accept SNAP and SFMNP payments.

Ms. Nolte also met with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture to understand the current process of distributing SFMNP vouchers in Louisville. She learned that there was only one (1) distribution center in the city, and that rates of participation in the program had declined over the past several years. Ms. Nolte was able to partner with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture and Louisville/Jefferson County Metro Government to expand the number of distribution points for SFMNP vouchers to each of the city's eight (8) "Neighborhood Place" locations.

Neighborhood Places are central locations for the provision of services related to mental and physical health, juvenile services, education, financial and housing assistance, child and adult welfare services, and employment services, and are dispersed across the community. When a citizen comes to a Neighborhood Place, he or she fills out one form that is used to determine eligibility for services. Neighborhood Place staff are trained to identify services or benefits that could support each individual client, and follow up with current clients to provide access to new benefits as they become available. Adding the Neighborhood Places to the list of approved SFMNP distribution centers provided broader access for Louisville's low-income seniors to this program.

Goal #1 – Object/Activity 3: Ms. Nolte entered into discussions with a number of community groups, including churches that sponsor farmers' markets, to identify communication strategies to recruit a base of volunteers. Efforts to recruit volunteers were extremely unsuccessful, though one volunteer engaged in long-term participation at the Phoenix Hill Market and others have participated at the Bardstown Road market. Notably, one (1) former volunteer at the Bardstown Road committed to taking over the management of the former Bluegrass Avenue Farmers Market as it moved to a new location, rebranded as the South Points Market, and developed relationships with new neighbors.

Goal #1 –Object/Activity 4: Four (4) farmers' market trainings took place during the grant period. Three (3) of these were provided by grant partner Community Farm Alliance ("CFA"). The schedule for conducting workshops was extended due to unusually high snowfall over the late winter and early spring of the first year of the grant, which made travel extremely difficult. The first training covered business planning, board development and fundraising and was attended by eleven (11) individuals. The second training covered the use of SNAP, WIC and SFMNP vouchers at farmers' markets and was attended by ten (10) individuals. The third training covered market manager support for vendors and best practices for market management, and was attended by ten (10) individuals.

The fourth training was provided by the Jefferson County Cooperative Extension Service and covered the value of coordination among market managers. This event was attended by fourteen (14) individuals, and resulted in the creation of a private Facebook page through which market managers can share information with each other, receive information from Extension, and collaborate in various ways. To date, only some of Louisville's market managers are engaged in the page. The training additionally generated interest in greater coordination for marketing and branding of Louisville's farmers markets, and started a conversation about shared administrative

services for farmers markets which is now being explored in more depth by the Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness using a portion of a grant received to help citizens of Louisville get healthier. This effort is a direct outgrowth of activities conducted under this Farmers Market Promotion Program Grant.

CFA and Ms. Nolte met with two organizations interested in starting new farmers markets. Though neither of these markets ultimately opened, the technical assistance provided by CFA and Ms. Nolte was helpful to the organizations for purposes of planning and understanding the challenges and realities of managing a farmers market, as well as the risks to farmers in participating in a new market.

Goal #2 –Object/Activity 1: Representatives of the Jefferson County Cooperative Extension Service attended market days at approximately half of the farmers markets in Louisville to provide information about seasonality of produce, healthy meal preparation and shopping within a budget at farmers markets. Extension Agents attended a number of other Louisville farmers markets, including the Southwest Farmers Market and the Gray Street Market, which accept SNAP for all eligible vendors, to provide this information as well.

Extension hosted a market manager meeting to discuss the value of coordination and collaboration as described above.

Goal #2—Object/Activity 2: The pamphlet attached at **Tab F** was developed to reflect the locations of all Louisville farmers markets and how to use transit to attend each.

Accomplishments:

- # of pickup locations for SFMNP vouchers increased from one (1) to nine (9)
- # of individuals trained: 45
- # of trainings provided: 4
- # of markets accepting SNAP at the market level (universal EBT) increased from three (3) to six (6)
- # of markets accepting SFMNP increased from four (4) to thirteen (13)
- Images showing volunteer t-shirts, tokens and stickers (not purchased with grant funds) prepared to promote farmers markets generally are contained behind **Tab E**, along with other photos of participating markets, market managers, project team participants and volunteers.

Bluegrass Farmers Market/South Points Farmers Market Transition. The Bluegrass Avenue Farmers Market, described in detail below, was challenged by low patronage and correspondingly low sales, which frustrated farmer participants who were primarily refugees. Despite a direct weekly subsidy payment offered to farmers by the hospital host, the farmers did not believe it to be worth their time to attend a market where maximum sales were only around

\$400 per vendor. This caused farmers who were already challenged as a result of their former refugee status to come late to the market, leaving them unprepared to serve first customers, or worse, to not show up at all. The market was not very visible from the public street, and was not in a location that suggests it is available for public shopping.

Though the hospital hoped that its staff would patronize the market, this was not the case. Anecdotally, it was reported that many staff were not willing to take time out of their workday to shop at the market, had no good place to store purchases at the hospital, and did not value the market as a source of food because of the limited number of vendors present. The market manager attempted to address several of these issues in partnership with hospital administrators. For example, the hospital agreed to purchase produce from vendors to be assembled by a hospital volunteer in “baskets” that were then wheeled on a cart around the hospital for purchase by staff and visitors. This effort, though creative, was ultimately not a success in promoting the purchase of food in the hospital. The hospital host decided to end its sponsorship of the market.

However, while the Bluegrass Avenue Market was winding down for good, a nearby Save-a-Lot grocery store had recently made a small grant to support the development of a refugee-based community farm located just around the corner from the hospital. The farm is managed by Catholic Charities Refugee Agricultural Partnership Project in cooperation with another local nonprofit focused on sustainable urban agriculture. The farm produces greens and other vegetables that the hospital plans to purchase for its dining services operations, and that Save-a-Lot currently offers for sale in its store. Ms. Nolte and other members of the grant project team brainstormed that this new farm could be the foundation of a conversation with the hospital and the Save-a-Lot owners to relocate the Bluegrass Avenue Farmers Market to the Save-a-Lot parking lot. There is precedent for Louisville grocery stores to host a weekly farmers market as a way to create space for community, support regional agriculture, and of course to drive customers into the store to supplement their purchases. The owner of the Save-a-Lot agreed to host the market, and hospital administrators were likewise supportive of the move. The market was rebranded as the South Points Market, building off a marketing campaign to promote tourism in the area.

Ms. Nolte has succeeded in identified a long-term volunteer at the Bardstown Road Farmers Market who was interested in taking over as market manager of the South Points Farmers Market and who had built the necessary skills to do so through her volunteer work at the Bardstown Road Market. The market is located on Taylor Boulevard, a high-traffic corridor served by transit and highly visible in the community, in the parking lot of the Save-a-Lot. Due to a number of factors, the South Points Market did not organize as a separate entity, meaning it needed a substantial amount of support to take on activities that are necessary to run a farmers market.

The owner of the Save-a-Lot was not willing to cover the additional insurance needed to operate the market in the parking lot or to cover the costs of paying a market manager to coordinate

market operations. The Jefferson County Cooperative Extension Service agreed to work with its insurance provided, Kentucky Farm Bureau, to cover the costs of site insurance for the South Points Market, and agreed to be the fiscal agent for market manager salary. Two local legislative officials who represent the area provided a small grant to cover a match for additional grant funding available through Community Farm Alliance to pay the market manager and establish a double value coupon program for SNAP recipients. Finally, and most importantly, Ms. Nolte was able to gain the support of the Bardstown Road Farmers Market to allow the South Points Market to organize as a satellite market, which gave South Points access to the Bardstown Road Market payment system so that it could accept EBT payment, including SNAP, at the market level (universal access).

Plans are in place to identify ways to maintain the South Points Market so that it can continue to serve a low-income, low-vehicular access area of the community and provide market opportunities for farmers.

Farmers' Market Association Potential. Throughout this grant, attention was paid to feedback received from market managers and others related to common needs and opportunities for collaboration. In particular, as discussed above, the training workshop hosted by the Jefferson County Cooperative Extension Service provided a formal opportunity to explore with market managers the potential for supported collaboration through shared services or the creation of a farmers' market association that could provide targeted support for back office functions that each market needs. Market managers expressed a growing interest in this opportunity over time. Following the end of formal grant activities, the Louisville Metro Department of Health and Wellness has organized follow-up conversations with farmers' market managers and determined that there are at least five (5) markets interested in creating a more formal relationship. Next steps are being explored with the goal of developing resources to launch some type of collaborative support for these markets, and potentially a farmers' market association.

Beneficiaries:

The following information describes each of the four markets participating in this phase of the project and provides baseline and year-end information related to sales, SNAP transactions, and on-farm job creation. Information collected to understand the customer profile at the Bardstown Road Market and the Bluegrass Market are contained in reports attached at **Tab B** provided by grant partner University of Louisville. Profiles of EBT users at the Bardstown Road, Phoenix Hill and South Points Markets are provided at **Tab C**.

Bardstown Road Farmers Market

The Bardstown Road Farmers Market, the oldest farmers market in Louisville, takes place Saturdays from 8:00 AM-12:00 PM in the parking lot of Bardstown Presbyterian Church and features twenty-six (26) regular vendors, many of which offer only prepared foods, crafts or

plants and are not therefore considered for purposes of this grant report. Bardstown Road is a highly travelled commercial corridor that connects a number of highly desirable and relatively affluent neighborhoods of Louisville. Transit service along the corridor is frequent and ridership is high. TARC, the local bus provider, runs five (5) lines, one of which features twelve (12)-fifteen (15) minutes frequency of stops, along the corridor in the vicinity of the market. A bus stop is located just steps from the entrance to the market, and lines connect to nearly every other area of the community, making transit access to the market simple. The market fills the entire parking lot, and patrons spill out onto the adjacent sidewalk on nearly every market day.

Due to the relatively larger number of vendors at this market and the fact that many offer prepared foods in addition to fresh foods, as well as the relative difficulty of gaining the cooperation of vendors in data collection, a sample of vendors reflective of the larger universe of vendor participants was targeted for data collection. Data reflects only fresh food sales, and not prepared food sales.

2014 total sales: \$57,300

2015 total sales to date: \$78,700

	Vendor 1	Vendor 2	Vendor 3	Vendor 4
April 2015	\$2,000	N/A	\$2,000	\$500
May 2015	\$3,000	\$1,400	\$3,500	\$1,500
June 2015	\$4,000	\$3,500	\$4,000	\$1,200
July 2015	\$5,500	\$2,500	\$4,000	\$3,500
August 2015	\$7,500	\$3,300	\$4,500	\$4,300
September 2015	\$6,000	\$3,400	\$1,800	\$2,700
October 2015	\$1,400	\$200	\$1,200	\$300
Jobs on farm (beginning of year)	n/a	1	3	2
Jobs on farm (end of year)	n/a	1	4	2

2015 SNAP Transactions to date: \$385

2015 Credit/Debit Transactions: \$10,723

2016 SNAP Transactions: \$1,135

2016 Credit/Debit Transactions: #23,284

Market resources and amenities:

Bardstown Presbyterian Church support, including use of parking lot, building, extra tables, chairs, kitchen, water, electricity on site, outdoor patio dining

Two (2) paid staff: a market manager and a newsletter editor

Board of directors (of market vendors)

Bank account owned by the market
 Website, Facebook page, Instagram account, and weekly emailed newsletter
 Longevity and reputation of being the first farmers market in Louisville
 Cool/fun neighborhood location
 Walkable area, sidewalk accessible
 Handicap parking
 Restrooms
 SNAP/credit/debit accepted
 Volunteers

Phoenix Hill Farmers Market

The Phoenix Hill Farmers Market is a relatively newer market, having been in existence for less than ten (10) years. It runs from 3:00-6:00 PM on Tuesdays and features eleven (11) vendors, though some offer only prepared foods and are not considered for purposes of this grant reporting. The market is located in the parking/storage lot of Fresh Start Growers Supply, a local business that offers environmentally sustainable agricultural supplies focused on organic farmers and urban agriculture enthusiasts. Located in the Phoenix Hill neighborhood, a relatively economically depressed area, the market has been diverse in clientele and prides itself on being a neighborhood resource, though some patrons stop by the market on their way out of downtown Louisville. The market has the ability to move inside during bad weather. Transit access to the market is extremely convenient from all areas of the community, and the location is within one (1) block of five (5) bus lines.

2013 sales (7 vendors): \$40,743

2014 sales (7 vendors): \$45,063

Vendor 1: \$10,679.00

Vendor 2: \$18,500.00

Vendor 3: \$6,500.00

Vendor 4: \$650.00 (joined the market in late August)

Vendor 5: \$4,103.00

Vendor 6: \$700.00

Vendor 7: \$3,200.00

2015 sales (6 vendors, one only part of the season): \$32,493.65

2016 sales (average of 7 vendors per market day): \$36,614

Vendor	2015 Sales	On-farm jobs	Maximum on-farm jobs
1	\$12,000.00	3	5
2	\$7,592.00	No data	No data
3	\$4,500.00	1	1
4	\$4,101.65	1	1
5	\$4,000.00	3	4 full time, 6 part-time

6	\$300.00 (small producer, only participated for part of the season)	No data	No data
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2015 SNAP transactions to date: \$160.98
2015 Credit/Debit transactions to date: \$1,000

2016 SNAP/SFMNP sales: \$6,561.74

Market resources and amenities:

- Phoenix Hill neighborhood association support
- Market manager
- Communication through the neighborhood association
- 2-3 festivals/events
- CSA pick-up location for 4 producers
- Convenient location in a residential area just outside downtown Louisville
- Parking onsite
- Restrooms
- SNAP/credit/debit accepted
- Market accepts SFMNP vouchers
- Volunteers

Bluegrass Farmers Market

The Bluegrass Farmers Market was located in the parking lot of Sts. Mary and Elizabeth Hospital, part of the Kentucky One Healthcare Network. The relationship between the hospital and the farmers market was quite unique, as the hospital provided direct support for the farmers who participate in the market, offering \$50 per vendor per day to encourage participation. The market was even more unique in that it is made up almost entirely of refugee growers organized through the Refugee Agricultural Partnership Project, an outreach activity of Catholic Charities, one (1) of two (2) refugee resettlement organizations in Louisville. The market started in 2015, with four (4) growers and one (1) prepared food vendor who did not participate on every market day. The market ran from 3:00-6:00 PM on Thursdays. The market experienced limited success, in part due to its location. Though the hospital hoped that staff would patronize the market to purchase fresh foods, this was mostly not the case. The market officially closed and resulted in the creation of the South Points Market as described above.

2014 sales: \$0 (this is a new market in the 2015-16 season)

2015 sales to date:

- Vendor 1: \$2,250 (May through September)
- Vendor 2: \$750 (10 weeks of participation)
- Vendor 3: no data
- Vendor 4: no data

Producer Jobs:

Vendor 1: 3 full-time, 1 part-time
Vendor 2: 3 full-time
Vendor 3: no data
Vendor 4: no data

2015 SNAP transactions to date: \$143
2015 Credit/Debit transactions to date: \$814.64

Market resources and amenities:

Access to bathroom
Parking easily accessible (market is located in the hospital parking lot)
Hospital promotion through newsletter and weekly intercom messages
Community marketing assistance (sign, press releases, council person newsletters)
Farmer support from hospital—hospital provided \$50 per vendor per week for 10 weeks
Market partners with area schools and non-profits

South Points Market

The South Points Market was organized following the closure of the Bluegrass Avenue Farmers Market to continue to serve the community and provide a sales outlet for farmers. Created as a satellite of the Bardstown Road Farmers Market, but with a separate market manager and fiscal agent (Cooperative Extension), the market featured three (3) regular vendors in its first year. Transit service to the market exists via the #6 bus. Located in the Hazelwood Neighborhood, where a higher concentration of immigrant and refugee families reside, the market serves a population that is generally less affluent than other areas of the city. Additional detail concerning the history of this market is contained above.

2016 SNAP Transactions: \$1,201
2016 Credit/Debit Transactions: \$1,504
Producer Jobs: n/a

Market resources and amenities:

Local elected official support
Support from Jefferson County Cooperative Extension
Support from site host Save-A-Lot
Market manager
Communication through various community channels
Refugee and immigrant farmer base
Convenient location in a residential area
Parking onsite
Restrooms
SNAP/credit/debit accepted
Market accepts SFMNP vouchers
Volunteers

Lessons Learned

Volunteer Recruitment. It was exceedingly challenging to recruit larger numbers of volunteers to support farmers' market activities. As described above, Ms. Nolte made contact with a number of community organizations that support farmers markets to attempt to recruit volunteers. Though she was successful in identifying long-term volunteers for both the Bardstown Road and Phoenix Hill markets, this effort did not come close to the project goal of 100 volunteers and market supporters and did not reach this goal by the end of this grant period.

Ms. Nolte engaged in informal polling of market attendees at the Bardstown Road Farmers Market to determine why volunteer recruitment was so challenging, and discovered that many patrons would be interested in volunteering for shorter periods of time on market days rather than for longer periods of time. Ms. Nolte reflected that volunteer commitment may be a longer-term goal that could be taken up by an established farmers market association should one develop in Louisville.

General use of SNAP benefits at markets. In general, SNAP usage at the markets supported to date grew over time, particularly following the announcement of a double-value coupon program available to SNAP and SFMNP buyers. While SNAP sales are low, credit and debit card sales were substantially higher. This is a benefit to the markets themselves as much to the farmers, as the markets charge a transaction fee for credit/debit card users, which can be used to support market operations. We will continue to report on credit/debit card transactions to see whether there is a trend in overall increased market sales as a result of this payment option.

Ms. Nolte faced many challenges in recruiting new markets to participate in this grant program. Many markets in Louisville are sponsored by faith-based organizations and neighborhood associations. With very few exceptions, most of these markets are organized for the benefit of providing community building for the sponsoring organization and its members, and not to provide support for Kentucky and Indiana producers. This philosophical challenge means that market managers are not persuaded by the opportunity this grant provides to increase economic benefit to producers. This realization caused Ms. Nolte to rethink framing her invitation as a benefit to the members of the sponsoring organization or the broader community served by that organization. However, even with this new approach to recruitment, many organizations did not see the benefit of taking on what is perceived as additional administrative and operational work to provide a service to low-income consumers, as many Louisville markets are located in affluent areas of the city and do not see themselves as serving low-income populations.

SFMNP Experience. More support can be given to markets around SFMNP vouchers. Additional voucher distribution sites created through this grant increased the prevalence of vouchers in the community, but market managers may need targeted support to make it easier to administer the program at the market level. The program application form is relatively simple to fill out for both

market managers and producers, but many market managers do not realize that they must fill out the form to allow vouchers to be used at the market, even if producers can accept them. This results in situations where a voucher holder cannot purchase from an authorized producer because the market is not also authorized. Markets must register every year with the state for SFMNP, which add another administrative task that market managers must remember to complete.

Tab A contains Ms. Nolte's observations on grant activities, and **Tab D** contains additional farmer perspectives on the program that contributed to learning related to this grant.