

**Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP)
Final Performance Report**

The final performance report summarizes the outcome of your LFPP award objectives. As stated in the LFPP Terms and Conditions, you will not be eligible for future LFPP or Farmers Market 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 LFPP 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 LFPP staff to avoid delays:

LFPP Phone: 202-720-2731; Email: USDALFPPQuestions@ams.usda.gov; Fax: 202-720-0300

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

Report Date Range:	September 30, 2014 - September 29, 2016
Authorized Representative Name:	Laura Deaton
Authorized Representative Phone:	415-423-3418
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Recipient Organization Name:	Trust for Conservation Innovation
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Food Commons Fresno Smart Food Hub
Grant Agreement Number:	14-LFPPX-CA-0023
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Fresno, CA
Total Awarded Budget:	\$99,600

LFPP 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: Kiel Schmidt; Email: kiel@foodcommonsfresno.org; Phone: 559-492-7249

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1. State the goals/objectives of your project as outlined in the grant narrative and/or approved by LFPP 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/Objective 1: Establish and evaluate an online “Smart” Food Hub
 - a. Progress Made: Our software research lead us to select an existing software called Local Orbit <<http://localorbit.com>> . It is now in place at <https://foodcommonsfresno.localorbit.com> with beta testing complete. It began full operations on 10/28/2015. Since that time, we have received feedback from our staff, farmers and customers and compile for Local Orbit. Some of those comments have already been addressed in the platform programming. Others have been added to the development list.
 - b. Impact on Community: The launch of the “Smart” software platform in place, we began purchasing from select local farms and selling to select 10 restaurants, 2 retailers, 4 Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) businesses, and 4 institutional buyers. Comments from buyers about the Local Orbit have been positive. “The ordering is smooth and I can order from anywhere on my phone.” Martin Franco chef/owner of Taste Kitchen. “I’m so excited about all the choices that you’ve opened up for my CSA” Brenda Ostrom owner of Mountain Meadow Farms.
 - ii. Goal/Objective 2: Establish physical Food Hub location with adequate space and equipment for food aggregating, sorting, packaging and distributing
 - a. Progress Made: We leased a 2,000 square foot building at 504 E Belmont, Fresno (census tract 060190000600) that became fully functional in 2015. With growth of our businesses we expanded August 2016 into a 5,000 square feet new facility at 202 Van Ness Ave (census tract 06019000400) and are converting 504 E. Belmont into a light processing commercial kitchen and food truck commissary.
 1. Produce box operation began in May 2015 and serves over 550 customers each week. Over 1,500 families served since launch.
 2. Wholesale deliveries began in June 2015, ahead of schedule. Wholesale Team has recorded **\$145,842.62 in sales.**
 3. The Mobile Farm Market was deployed throughout 2015 in 8 Fresno County food desert neighborhoods. Collecting 354 survey responses.
 4. The IT equipment and the food hub software (Local Orbit) was installed in November 2015 and has been operational since, recording 1,020 transactions.
 5. Mobile market refrigerated truck purchase in April 2016. It was modified with shelving, signage and roll out awning for use as pop up market. It allowed expanded eight pop up produce markets as well as

on farm pick-ups and customer deliveries with modern cold plate refrigeration for energy efficient low emissions and improved cold chain on deliveries.

b. Impact on Community: We have received strong support within the community for our food hub operations, with increasing produce box buyers and diverse wholesale customers including restaurants, farm CSAs, retailers, and major institutions. Packing team was hired entirely from neighborhood surrounding Food Hub. Employees and customers have increased their consumption of local produce.

iii. Goal/Objective 3: Recruit six (6) producers to become Food Hub suppliers

a. Progress Made: Over the course of the grant a total of 71 producers became suppliers to the food hub. Recruitment included referrals by farm and community partners, outreach at farmers markets, online research, and farm visits by project staff.

b. Impact on Community: Of the 71 producers, 19 of them reported increased and diversified incomes due to work with Food Hub. Producers also highlighted an increase in public recognition of their operations and brand. The community of consumers benefited by increased access to local products available at restaurants, retailers, and institutions.

iv. Goal/Objective 4: Outreach to restaurants, institutional food providers, and neighborhood grocery stores to become Food Hub customers - with particular focus on providing access to produce in low-income areas

a. Progress Made: We contracted with Ppl Studio to create 3 minute as well as quick 15 second vignettes of farmer stories with Bounkhong Farms, T&D Willey Farms, Sweet Home Ranch, and Sun Smiling Valley Farm. The videos were publicly posted starting 3/9/16 and have garnered over **10,000 views** across Youtube, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram platforms. The videos were also picked up by the Community Media Access Collaborative (CMAC), Valley PBS, Fresno County Farm Bureau, CBS 47, KSEE 24, and Fresno Bee. They remain relevant and are regularly recirculated. Direct outreach has reached over 120 potential customers. We have served 70 wholesale customers with 39 of them ongoing purchasing product on a repeat basis.

b. Impact on Community: Restaurants, farm CSAs, producers, retailers, and institutional buyers have purchased from our Food Hub and increased local produce purchases by \$ \$85,305.38 to **\$145,842.62** from \$60,537.24 last reported. Purchasers include:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. 41 Oaks Farm | 7. Central Fish Company |
| 2. Ag Link | 8. Chacon's Catering & The Gastro Grill, LLC |
| 3. Ampersand Ice Cream | 9. Corazon Baking Company |
| 4. Benaddiction | 10. Cultiva La Salud |
| 5. Bethany Inner City Church | 11. Dusty Buns Bistro |
| 6. Boys and Girls Club | 12. Erna's Elderberry House |

13. Experimental Quesadilla Lab
14. Fansler Restaurant Group
15. FARM FRESH BOWLS INC
16. Farmer's Daughter CSA
17. Fermentation's Sake
18. First Presbyterian Church of Fresno
19. Flat Bottom Grills
20. Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission
21. Fulton Yoga Collective
22. Garden Cocktails
23. Grizzly City Pizza
24. Harvest Fields Organic Farm CSA
25. Joe On The Go Cafe
26. Kern Family Farm/Gnarly Carrot
27. Kristina's Natural Market
28. La Boulangerie
29. Lime Lite
30. Mandela Marketplace
31. Morrison Healthcare (CRMC Fresno)
32. Mountain Meadow Farms CSA
33. Ol Buckaroo
34. Ooh De Lolli
35. Ooooby
36. Painted Table
37. Partnership for a Healthier America
38. Patio Cafe
39. Peeve's Local Market
40. Peeve's Public House
41. Pressbox 1
42. Pressbox 2
43. Pressbox 3
44. Radisson Hotel Fresno Conference Center
45. Raw Earth Bar
46. RawFresno.com
47. Rev's
48. Richard's Prime Rib & Seafood
49. Roger Rocka's Dinner Theater
50. Rosa Brothers Milk Company
51. Sage Roots Produce
52. Service Systems Associates, Inc.
53. Sierra Nut House
54. South Gate Brewing
55. Susan Gutierrez Baking
56. Taste Kitchen
57. Terrie Wood Catering
58. The Almond Company
59. The Farmer's Daughter CSA
60. The Loving Hut
61. The Market
62. The Provisionaries
63. The Republican
64. The Vernal Group
65. Thompson's High Sierra Catering
66. Tree of Life Cafe
67. Trelio Restaurant
68. University of California Merced
69. Veggiegirl.me
70. Veni Vidi Vici
71. Wedgewood Banquet
72. Willow Creek Catering
73. Young Chefs Academy

- v. Goal/Objective 5: Design and test produce pick-up and delivery systems to maximize transportation efficiencies
 - a. Progress Made: Pickup and delivery systems were designed collaboratively with Local Orbit sales platform consultant, driver, suppliers, and customers. The system was implemented weekly and refined for efficiency over the course of operations. Transportation efficiencies are being assessed and improved as necessary. Geographic grouping, alignment of delivery times, and volume of sales are factors identified for increasing delivery efficiency.
 - b. Impact on Community: Produce is delivered to restaurants and institutions in a manner that makes the most efficient use of energy keeping costs low. This has increases the local produce purchasing of our customers. Additionally, we are

the only distribution business that provided the level of source identification of local farms. Additionally, the details and marketing materials about our suppliers that we provide to customers have provided them with the tools to market the farm to fork aspects of their businesses or organizations to customers. This has resulted them in reporting increase in sales and positive customer feedback.

- vi. Goal/Objective 6: Evaluate Smart Food Hub as a model and share lessons with other Food Commons prototypes as well as other interested communities.
 - a. Progress Made: Through evaluation of procurement, delivery and accounting, our Smart Food Hub is being evaluated for best practices with the goal of offering to other Food Commons sites. Due to this work, Food Commons Fresno was invited to join the USDA Food LINC cohort related to value chain coordination.
 - b. Impact on Community: Progress and lessons learned were shared at the National Good Food Network's 2016 Food Hub Conference in Atlanta, GA. Board member Warren King participated on a panel titled A Survey of Emerging & Cutting Edge Models of Hubs. Staff also presented at American Planning Association CA 2016 conference in Pasadena, Humanics class presentations at Fresno State University, and Working for the Valley: People, Food, Land & Water! conference at UC Merced.
 - vii. Goal/Objective 7: Create a measurable increase in local produce sold locally
 - a. Progress Made: Sales to restaurants began in June of 2015. Total sales for the grant period are **\$145,842.62** up from \$60,537.24 last reported.
 - b. Impact on Community: An extension this work through USDA Food LINC initiative will be focused on detailed metrics to more accurately create baselines, determine market potential, identify barriers, and strategizing on removing those barriers. Substantial trust has been built with each customer. We are actively surveying them about past levels of local produce purchasing and comparing with new sales through Food Commons Fresno 100% local food hub. Prior to our launch there was no 100% local food distributor and many distributors do not source identify the produce they deliver to local restaurants. So our methods and product availability are already making an impact in restaurant buying habits.
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: 4 (wholesale manager, supply coordinator, driver, sales associate, packer)
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: 1 (truck driver)
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: 16 (cook at Taste Kitchen, farm manager at KMK Farms, 7 staff at The Republican, production assistant at Moluca Chocolate, bookkeeper

at Bon Pack Produce, farm manager and farm caretaker at Food Commons Fresno, egg handler at Denham Family Farm, production assistant at Ampersand Ice Cream, farm hand at Harvest Fields Organic Farm)

- iv. Number of markets expanded: 19
- v. Number of new markets established: 9
- vi. Market sales totaled \$145,842.62 during the entire grant period. Market sales increased by \$ \$85,305.38 from previous report period. Percentage increase is 141% from previously reported \$60,537.24. There were no sales by our organization prior to grant period. There was no baseline of local purchasing with our customers, because no other distributor working in our region provided source identifying. All sales in the grant period were counted as increase in local sales.
- vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 73 up from 27 previously reports
 - a. Percent Increase: 170% since last reported.

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?

- i. Our Smart Food Hub is located in a low-income food desert.
 - a. We hired our produce packers from the neighborhood by posting a hiring sign with the job description on our building window.
 - b. We hired Spanish-speaking and Hmong-speaking outreach specialists to expand our reach into those communities.
 - c. Bon Pack Produce, Ferrer Farms, J.L. Produce, Bounkhong Farms, Xai Chang Farm, Masumoto Family Farm, Mendoza Berry Farm, Rancho de Rodney, Mokichi Okada Association, Saechao Fresh Strawberry Farms, Moluca Chocolate, Alma Gordillo Organic Produce, and Sun Smiling Valley Farms are ethnic owned and operated producers that have seen an increase in sales to local markets.
 - d. Freedom School Farm and Sweet Potato Project are both African-American youth led farms.
 - e. Central Fish Company, Mandela Marketplace, The Provisionaries, Corazon Baking Company, and Taste Kitchen are minority owned and serving businesses that have increased sales of local produce.
 - f. Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission, Community Regional Medical Center Fresno, UC Merced, Boys and Girls Club, and Partnership for Healthier America are institutional customers that serve low income and at-risk populations have increased the amount of local produce served.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

- i. Who are your community partners?

- a. Fresno Metro Ministry - a resource with farmer outreach and preparation of grower guidelines
 - b. Lowell CDC - a neighborhood network that supports our food hub concept
 - c. Tower District Marketing Committee - a resource for connections to restaurant customers and restaurateurs
 - d. GVP Farmers Inc, named after General Vang Pao and also called Golden Valley Producers - a connection to low income Hmong farmers
 - e. Fresno Business Council - advises on business development and publicizes our work within the business and broader communities
 - f. Central Valley Community Foundation - funds our work and connects us with other potential non-profit and for-profit partners
 - g. County of Fresno – outreach into schools
 - h. Cultiva La Salud – joint projects with schools and California FreshWorks
 - i. Office of Fresno mayor Ashley Swearengin – publicity for our Smart Food Hub
 - j. 11th Hour project – financial support and matching funds
 - k. Partnership for a Healthy America - running FNV.com campaign and purchasing fruit to sponsor local youth sporting events.
 - l. USDA/Wallace Center Food LINC project - national cohort of food hubs and value chain coordinators providing peer-to-peer learning, benchmarking, and networking.
 - m. Freedom School Farm and Sweet Potato Project - Youth farms given education of post-harvest handling, food safety, and marketing assistance.
 - n. Family Farmed - collaborating on small ethnic farmer training related to postharvest handling, food safety, and market channels.
- ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project?
 - a. Details are above, but in general, we are creating an extensive network of partners to support and assist our work.
 - iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project’s future activities, beyond the performance period of this LFPP grant?
 - a. They will continue to help us publicize our work and reach new customers, suppliers, partners and funders. They will also remain involved in ongoing value chain coordination work.
5. Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project? Food Commons Fresno Smart Food Hub project was implemented by the Trust for Conservation Innovation’s contractor “Fresno Food Commons Trust”. Successful completion of the project described in this Report is a direct result of Contractor’s work.
6. Have you publicized any results yet?*
- i. If yes, how did you publicize the results?
 - a. Five newspaper accounts in the Fresno Bee have covered our operations

- b. Continued coverage in Fresno Bee food and ag sections
- c. Three newspaper accounts in The Fresno Business Journal.
- d. Mayor Swearingin talked about our operations in her 2015 State of the City address, which got wide television coverage in the Fresno area
- e. We regularly update our Facebook accounts, our website, Instagram and Twitter feeds.
- f. Freelance radio journalist Ali Budner has followed our launch and her story was recently accepted by “The World” show on Public Radio International and was also included on Valley Public Radio
- g. Food Commons Fresno was included on a segment of the California Report on public radio.
- h. Farmer Stories videos funded through this work have been viewed over 10,000 times on social media. In addition, they were rebroadcast through CMAC, PBS, CBS 47 and KSEE 24.
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC128AJDLXe3yvAF0d8RjDpQ>
- ii. To whom did you publicize the results? The general public and people who have expressed an interest in what we’re doing.
- iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? The Fresno Bee has a paid circulation of 157,000. We have reached at least that many people through television and social media.

*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?
 - i. If so, how did you collect the information? Feedback has been collected from personal conversations with farmers and chefs. The Mobile Farm Market was deployed throughout 2015 in 8 Fresno County food desert neighborhoods. Collecting 354 survey responses regarding food buying habits and demographics.
 - ii. What feedback have you collected thus far (specific comments)?
 - a. “We are so excited to have you doing this work. I put you on our menu board right away.” Dustin owner of Dusty Buns
 - b. “T&D Willey carrots and leeks are the best I’ve ever had. Glad to be able to order them again.” Eric, head chef Roger Rocka’s Dinner Theater
 - c. “I couldn’t afford to use organic if it wasn’t for you.” Martin owner Taste Kitchen
 - d. “Restaurants are just too much work for us.” Denesse co-owner T&D Willey Farms
 - e. “If you started a year ago, our farm would have been able to keep doing eggs.” River Roots Farms
 - f. “It is so easy to work with you, I couldn’t have imagined a better system” Brenda owner Mountain Meadow Farms

- g. “Your food hub is exactly what we need to open the farm to fork restaurant that we want in Three Rivers. We are serious about working with you on large orders as we open.” Nicky French - owner ol’ Buckaroo.
- h. “This is fantastic when we can make our tight fruit budget work for local apples and oranges. These look so much better than what we usually get.” Jon Escobar - Head Chef of Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission.
- i. “You’re helping use actually exceed and prove our local sourcing mandates from the UC system. No one else could do this for us with produce.” Mitch Vanagten - head chef UC Merced Dining Services.
- j. “My directors are going to be blown away, that we can source so much local fruit from you.” Andy Hatcher, head chef Community Regional Medical Center Fresno

8. Budget Summary:

- i. As part of the LFPP 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? Yes
 - a. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award? Total sales \$145,842.62, gross profit for Wholesale operation was \$15,396, earned income on LFPP funding \$2,492.88. It was used for growth and scaling of the project.

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).
 - a. Wholesale food buyers in region are very frugal. Work on building efficiencies to reduce costs, build toward larger scale purchases for better prices. Meanwhile, be very clear on the value proposition of food hubs and local foods.
 - b. Videos and farmer stories are very impactful. They get shared widely, drive sales and maintain a relevance for a long period.
 - c. Cultivating a core of restaurant customers were highly visible to the public but were not large purchases. We were able to leverage these relationships to land larger institutional customers. One head chef we worked with at Lime Lite restaurant, got the job as head chef for Community Regional Medical Center Fresno through the food service company Morrison Healthcare. A relationship that was sales under \$100/week turned into a customer that stated at \$800/week and growing.
 - d. Our Farm CSA customers ended up being a larger customer segment than we expected. Farms looking to supplement their own production to satisfy their CSA members were very mission aligned for local and organic sourcing and less frugal on pricing.

- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:
 - a. Goals and outcome measures were successfully achieved.
- 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:
 - a. Budget adjustments slowed progress. Learned to build in flexibility in items that are not easily costed out in grant application process.

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.
 - a. This project has helped us launch a significant local food hub and Wholesale operations. These operations will continue to grow and increase impact as more volume is sold and local food consumed.
 - b. Collaboration with USDA is continuing through the Food LINC program. This will extend and multiply our impact through value chain coordination.
- 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?
 - a. Research related to nutritional and economic impact of local and organic foods could be useful. This would help in many customer conversations including making the case for large institutions for increasing food buying budgets.