

**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>	October 1, 2015 – Sept. 29, 2018 (Project continued through December 9, 2017)
Authorized Representative Name:	Kay Kirkland
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Recipient Organization Name:	The City of Enterprise
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	"From Farm to Table" Promotion and Advertising Campaign
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	15FMPPAL0096
Year Grant was Awarded:	2015
Project City/State:	Enterprise, AL
Total Awarded Budget:	\$52,000

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/Objective 1: To create and expand opportunities for local growers to sell their products directly to the consumer.**

- a. Progress Made: Thanks in great part to the grant funding during the past two years, the Enterprise Farmers Market has been successful in creating and expanding opportunities for local growers to sell their products directly to the consumer. Since this goal is perpetual, however, we are still working to recruit more farming vendors and create even more interesting and creative ways to create opportunities.

The Enterprise Farmers Market transformed in 2015 from an outside market made up of makeshift tables covered by umbrellas or tents, and vegetables and melons sold from the backs of pickup trucks to a covered, open-air facility with ceiling fans and indoor bathrooms and large wooden display tables supplied to the vendors. Since many vendors said that “a good place to sell” is one of the most important needs for farmers and expanded garden growers with produce to sell, the City of Enterprise provided a major boost in creating and expanding the opportunities for growers to sell their products in a more comfortable, convenient location and tailor-made facility.

About six months after the initial opening of the newly constructed Farmers Market building, the FMPP grant was implemented.

With the funding, the city:

- Planned year-round activities at the market to enhance the market experience and draw people who had not normally visited the market on a regular basis. Arts and crafts vendors, cooking demonstrations, recipe swaps, pumpkin painting, egg decorating and other kids activities, themed contests, art-related projects and other activities were involved in the special events, which included Easter at the Market, Watermelon Day, Pumpkin Day, Christmas at the Market, all added to the annual lineup that had already included the traditional peak season Market Kickoff celebration.
- Purchased billboard advertising. The FMPP funding purchased two billboards per month that were rotated month to month around in different locations throughout the city in 2016 and 2017. One billboard contains general market information while the other focuses on the special activities for the month. Many market visitors have indicated that they had seen the billboards, and some of the vendors say that customers mention seeing the billboards. Some vendors attribute their expanding business during the past couple of years in part to the billboard advertising.
- Purchased newspaper and radio advertising that helped spread the word about regular market days and special events. Newspaper and radio advertising is effective, and “word of mouth” is great person-to-person advertising. Yet, social media advertising is equal to if not

most effective. The city's Farmers Market business Page on Facebook has to date 1,612 "Likes" and 1,641 "Followers." The City of Enterprise also utilizes its Farmers Market Facebook page, the city website and individual employee Facebook and Twitter pages to invite other social media users to events or to make Facebook "Friends" or Twitter "followers" aware of what's available at the market and what activities are taking place there. In recent months, the use of live streaming video from the Farmers Market page has been a great and effective way to keep those interested in Farmers Market activities up to date in real time. If another FMPP grant were available to this city again, we have some ideas about how to fund some promotional projects utilizing live video.

Our objectives at the outset of this grant were: Ensuring that the market is used to its fullest potential for the benefit of farmers who seek to sell their products directly to the consumer; working to make citizens of Enterprise and the surrounding communities aware and more familiar with the market; encouraging healthy eating and educating the public about the nutritional, environmental and economic benefits of buying locally-produced fruits and vegetables.

Billboard advertising was continued throughout 2017, made possible by the FMPP grant. Free media coverage through the use of city-produced press releases as well as paid advertising in newspapers and on radio was effective for publicizing regular market activities as well as special events at the market. Media representatives were invited to the activities, and publication of pre-event articles and post-event coverage was helpful to promote farmers, arts and crafts vendors and other activities.

One event, "Peanut Day," was added to the line-up of special events for the year. Several other new activities along with instructional classes and demonstrations were also a part of the line-up for 2017 that helped to further draw people to the market.

All of the above activities are helping us to achieve the objectives listed at the outset of the FMPP grant.

We still have growing to do and improvements to make, but we believe the FMPP grant has given us a great start, giving us the ability in most cases to use the market to a greater potential than our city would have been financially able to. Billboards and other media ads have helped to make citizens aware and more familiar with the market. Cooking demonstrations, recipe swaps and events focusing on specific produce has helped to encourage healthy eating and educate the public about the nutritional, environmental and economic benefits of buying locally-produced fruits and vegetables. We've increased vendor participation and most vendors believe their customer bases as well as market visitors have increased.

Vendors say that the Farmers Market gives them a place to sell and have a connection to the public, and the advertising and other marketing and special event strategies help to bring in more potential buyers

b. Impact on Community: We have been evaluating the “Farm to Table” project from the overall community standpoint as well as the impact on growers and vendors. As we’ve said before in these reports, obtaining really accurate data is extremely difficult, practically next to impossible, because the Enterprise market is open three mornings per week and is a come-and-go market. We have not discovered an effective way to measure participation from the public because they enter and leave from all sides of the market. Some come to browse, buy and socialize while others come for one or two items and leave.

But the growers/vendors generally are continuing to see good numbers of customers on the busiest market days, which normally are Thursdays and Saturdays. Tuesdays generally have less participation from both growers and customers.

The impact on growers has been positive, even though most of our farmers are hesitant to disclose their sales figures. While some report that their return on investment for market participation is slightly better than in previous years, others say their business has grown significantly. Since 2015, the number of farming vendors who have signed up for the market has grown by one-third, increasing from 24 to 34 in 2016 and remaining steady in 2017 with 32. The sign-up numbers have doubled if you compare to 2014, before the new Farmers Market facility was completed and the FMPP grant was implemented. (Note: Not all signed-up farmers participated at the same time on any given market day. Some participate only during peak season or others when specialty crops are ready; some choose only specific market days to participate.)

Three farmers participated only one to three times this past year. Those three had specialized produce products (pumpkins, for instance) that were adversely affected by weather conditions and therefore were available only for a brief window of time.

The market had 10-12 growers participate almost every open market day from spring to late fall, which was a definite increase; three vendors continued to come on at least one market day each week from mid-November through mid-December.

These numbers do not include the 10 arts and crafts vendors who regularly participated in special events at the market in 2017. That number increased from eight in 2015 to 17 in 2016, but dropped to 10 in 2017. We believe the addition of several arts and crafts festivals in communities near Enterprise during the same time frame adversely affected that participation.

In verbal and written surveys during the past nine months, we asked the growers about sales. The answers closely followed those given previously, with several vendors indicating they have experienced about a 30- to 50-percent increase in revenue since 2015 while the majority questioned indicated they had experienced anywhere from 10 to 30 percent increase in sales.

As is common in most markets, some vendors – about 30 percent at the Enterprise market – have multiple items of produce to sell, from tomatoes, squash and cucumbers to watermelons, greens and even peanuts. But many of the growers are specialized in one or two items – such as peas and butterbeans; blueberries; peaches; honey; jams, jellies or relishes made from a home-grown

specialties like plums, blackberries, peppers, etc. The type of produce or items for sale creates specific sales characteristics and results.

For example, while vendors who sell multiple or many items say they make sales to 30 or 50 people per typical sales day, specialized vendors may make sales to 10 to 30 people. Nevertheless, most vendors reported increased sales overall over the past two years. One specialized vendor reported almost doubling of sales in 2016 but then experiencing a 19-percent decline in 2017. Despite that vendor's overall decline, the farmer reported an increase in repeat customers and the need to produce more peppers in order to make more sauces and pepper products because of increased demand.

Another farming vendor who also sells baked goods, said her 2017 sales also declined. We do not have an explanation for that since visitors to the market appeared to be increasing.

In terms of the impact on the community as a whole, more and more people are "discovering" the market. While specific numbers of visitors cannot be determined because of the come-and-go participation, the estimate on some special days over the two-year period has been 600 to 800 people, at least. A normal Saturday at the market is estimated at 300 to 400 people. Based on these estimates, we believe the number of individual sales is probably higher than reported.

As one vendor said, the market gives a fun and interesting attraction for the community and for visitors and tourists. Enterprise has a surprising number of visitors and tourists largely because of nearby Fort Rucker, a major U.S. Army post. Military members temporarily stationed here seek out activities to occupy their non-working days, and they enjoy entertaining visiting family members from all over the nation and world by exploring what Enterprise has to offer. The market helps to satisfy that desire by offering them unique and interesting products.

ii. **Goal/Objective 2: To create and expand opportunities for consumers to buy fresh, homegrown products directly from the local growers.**

a. Progress Made: Significant progress has been made as more and more consumers become aware of the market and what it has to offer. With an increase in the number of vendors, consumers benefit not only from the accessibility but the variety of fresh produce and other food products available at the market.

Expanding opportunities especially for low-income consumers has been a major goal but also a major challenge during the past two years. We have been unsuccessful in persuading most vendors to participate in the state Farmers Market Authority's low-income voucher program, primarily, according to some, because of perceived administrative difficulties. We estimate that only 10 percent of people do use the vouchers with participating vendors. We also have not had much feedback from the public indicating a demand for more vendors to accept the vouchers.

The location of the market within walking distance of two low-income areas provides easy access for the low-income consumers. Vendors report that residents from these areas are among the regular customers but we have no accurate way to measure whether customers are low-income consumers.

The effort to reach out to low-income consumers is among the goals we are continuing to work on.

b. Impact on Community:

Parents and grandparents have shared with the market manager as well as other city leaders and officials that the special activities at the market provide great bonding time and wonderful teaching moments for them with youngsters. Because of the various booths at the market, children have had access to learn important and fun information such as how to grow pumpkins, peanuts and watermelons, and how to make homemade peanut butter. Children, with many adults helping out, have painted pumpkins and decorated eggs and colored ornaments while adults have learned canning tips and how to cook with fresh vegetables in season. They've competed in deviled egg contests, other cooking events, watermelon eating contests, watermelon seed-spitting contests and even an Easter hat parade. They've learned how to carve pumpkins for spooky or decorative displays and how to carve watermelons, cantaloupes or honeydew melons into almost anything.

They've shopped for produce and for arts and crafts, and many have developed relationships with producers. One relationship this past year blossomed into the opportunity for a national television appearance featuring the Enterprise Farmers Market. A segment of "The Cowboy Way – Alabama" was filmed at the Farmers Market in 2017 because of the connection between one of the show's stars and a local restaurant owner who buys fresh foods regularly from the market. The show will air sometime in early 2018, and can potentially reach hundreds of thousands of people. The network on which the show airs has an audience of 81 million. We expect the show will provide positive exposure for the Farmers Market and for Enterprise as a whole.

iii. **Goal/Objective 3: To strengthen the economic viability of local farmers through access to individual customers and potential commercial buyers (i.e. local restaurants, grocers)**

Progress Made: We think much progress has been made on this goal. The farmer/vendors receive advertising benefits through the Farmers Market promotions and social media efforts, introducing the Market to new customers all year round.

During the past two years, at least three local restaurants have begun using produce purchased at the Farmers Market to prepare meals on their regular menus. Vendors also report they have networked with or developed promising contacts for more retail or commercial business. As you may know, many national chains are bound by contract to use specific products provided through their parent companies, making utilization of the local Farmers Market difficult or impossible.

Market leaders have plans to further promote and recognize businesses that take advantage of the availability of fresh food at the market in 2018.

a. Impact on Community: The participation of more growers and other vendors, and the increasing overall sales in most cases creates the turnover effect in the local economy. In this case, the money invested in growing fresh produce actually turns over multiple times – from the grower to the buyer and, in this case, the restaurant owner to the restaurant customer. Grower success and buyer success in the case of commercial interests, translates to more income and more ability for everyone involved to buy goods and services that contribute to the tax base of the community.

In addition, the accessibility of healthy fresh foods made available at the market encourages healthy eating and can thereby make a difference in the lives of those who are seeking a healthier, more nutritional lifestyle. The availability of produce and the educational opportunities that have been provided at the market have actually introduced many people to previously unfamiliar types of food and how to use them in the everyday diet. In addition, the demonstrations and guest chefs, including experts from the local Cooperative Extension Service, have educated cooks in new or different ways to prepare foods for their families using fresh vegetables, fruits and herbs. In most cases as well, fresh fruits and vegetables are more economical to cook than retail items.

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, 2015). Include further explanation if necessary.

- i. Number of direct jobs created: 10
- ii. Number of jobs retained: 40
- iii. Number of indirect jobs created: unknown
- iv. Number of markets expanded: 3
- v. Number of new markets established: 3
- vi. Market sales increased by \$ unknown and increased by an average of about 25%. That figure would be an average year-round, since the Enterprise Market is open for farmers to use year-round.
- vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 30
 - a. Percent Increase: 30 percent

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?
Our promotion efforts reached out across all ethnic backgrounds and income and access levels, and to businesses. We involved businesses in various activities at the market and invited the public in general through the various forms of advertising made possible by the grant.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

- i. Who are your community partners?

As from the beginning, our community partners have been, in addition to the

- local growers;
- arts and craft vendors who have enhanced our special event days;
- the Coffee County Extension Service, which has helped with many activities, including canning classes, recipe demonstrations, peanut-butter making, Christmas decorating with natural yard and garden flowers and greenery;

- the Enterprise Chamber of Commerce, which has provided volunteers to help with Farmers Market activities and has assisted in promoting the market among its members and the public;
- Enterprise High School, which has allowed students and student groups to assist with Farmers Market activities as volunteers and for student credits. Groups include the Future Farmers of America, the Art Club, Astra Club and Interact Club;
- Local churches, who have assisted during special events with storytime and other activities;
- Businesses, who have donated cash prizes and other items for various activities such as the “Watermelon-Eating Contest,” the “Devilicious Deviled Egg Contest” and the Pumpkin Painting Contest.
- The Master Gardeners Club, which has conducted classes and activities.
- The Alabama Forestry Commission, who gave away pine seedlings and conducted education on tree-growing.
- Many city departments and leaders, including the Parks and Recreation Director and Department staff, and the Community Services Coordinator and Staff; and other community entities.

ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the FMPP project?

In most cases, the Market coordinator could not have successfully carried out the market projects without assistance from these entities. By helping to make special events a success and keeping the market properly maintained and prepared results in greater success for the farming vendors and arts and crafters, as well as the consumer. Their assistance can directly be attributed to increasing customers at the market.

iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project’s future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMPP grant?

Most of the entities have indicated they will be willing to continue working with the Market Manager to continue the various activities. Some have pledged to make certain activities – for example, the Homemade Peanut Butter-Making Demonstration and Taste-Testing – an annual tradition at the market.

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

N/A

6. Have you publicized any results yet?*

- i. If yes, how did you publicize the results? Specific results have been very difficult to measure, but in terms of publicizing the market activities themselves, local television stations and newspapers reported crowd sizes for events and whether the event was considered successful.
- ii. To whom did you publicize the results? Newspapers, Television stations, other media, etc.
- iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? Newspaper reports reach approximately 30,000 people, based on circulation reports; the primary broadcaster in the area has an outreach of about 50,000; and social media efforts reached 1,000 to 2,000 people. (The Facebook business page has 1,612 total Likes and 1,641 total

Follows.) Billboard advertising is estimated by the company to get about 35,000 views per month.

Those numbers include all ethnic backgrounds, ages, genders, income levels, etc.

*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?

Yes, feedback has been very positive. It has primarily been collected through individual contact with community leaders and community members, and through the Farmers Market Facebook business page.
 - ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?

Here are some examples of reviews from the Facebook page:

 - *“This is a very nice facility! There’s a vendor that makes a peanut butter cake for only \$5 each and it’s the best cake I’ve ever had! You can’t go wrong when you visit the Enterprise Farmers Market.”*
 - *“Great place to go for farm fresh produce. Very nice facility, nice people. Great food. It’s a part of our grocery shopping every week. We stop there first. Great amount of value given for our dollars.”*
 - *“Enterprise is definitely the city of progress. Thank you for building a place for every age to enjoy. We love getting fresh produce from the farmers and all the events for the children. Extremely clean environment!!!!”*
 - *“I love the Farmers Market in Enterprise. Great prices great produce!”*

By far, these are the kinds of comments we receive in person as well. Negative feedback is rare, but we did have one Facebook post in which a customer complained about the quality of unshucked corn purchased at the market, but that is an issue that we cannot control.
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?
 - a. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award?

N/A
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).

We learned that additional activities at the market on market days is an effective way to draw people to the market and increase farmers’ exposure to people who might not otherwise visit the market. The activities have a positive impact on sales.

The lesson was also reinforced that quality produce, meats and other items will establish repeat business when combined with good publicity.

- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:

Our goals were largely completed, but the one area in which we were disappointed was in establishing more connections between businesses and farmers, especially restaurants and grocery stores. At least two locally-owned restaurants began using farmers market products regularly, but policies, rules and regulations often prevent franchise establishments to take advantage of locally-grown produce.

We also found that some people who grow produce are resistant to going through the “red tape” in order to use the farmers market. Some do not want to, or cannot afford, to pay the market fee (\$20 a month) or the business license fees where applicable and some do not want to go to the time and trouble to follow Farmers Market Authority or USDA requirements.

10. Describe any lessons learned in the administration of the project that might be helpful for others who would want to implement a similar project:

Good record-keeping throughout the life of the project is essential. Our primary problem was in obtaining good statistics because at an open air market, keeping track of the number of visitors on anything but a slow day is next to impossible. We plan on limiting entry points this year. In addition, farmers, who view their participation at the market as their “business” are reluctant to share specific financial or sales information, so measuring success with anything other than a good estimate is quite difficult. We would certainly accept advice on that front for future reference.

11. 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.

Because of the success of the project in making the public more aware of our new market facility, increasing its use by farmers and making fresh produce more available and accessible to the public, we plan to add even more activities at the market this year. Our goal is to have one or more classes every Saturday at the market and on Tuesday or Thursday market days when possible. The classes will include cooking with specific vegetables in season; canning, recipe exchange, backyard gardening, flower gardening, fruit tree care, pecan and peanut events, etc. We also are planning a pioneer day in which participants may be making soap, making cane syrup, cooking over an open fire, etc. With these efforts, we hope to increase sales by at least 10 percent.

- 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? We will be especially emphasizing recruitment of farmers to use the market, encouraging them to explore the possibility of growing and selling types of fruits or vegetables not as commonly available here. The FMPP grant has been vital to the success of the new market facility. The City of Enterprise and Farmers Market are greatly appreciative.