

**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-September 30, 2017
Authorized Representative Name:	Jennifer Sime
Authorized Representative Phone:	212-551-2924
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Recipient Organization Name:	International Rescue Committee
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Garden to Consumer: Pop-up Farm Stand Project
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	15FMPPNY0015
Year Grant was Awarded:	2015
Project City/State:	Phoenix, AZ
Total Awarded Budget:	\$100,000

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: _Ryan Mooney; Email: _ryan.mooney@rescue.org; Phone: 212-551-2957

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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: Increase direct sales opportunities for 30 local farmers and 30 urban gardeners by providing infrastructure to support 58 pop-up farm stands per year, including tents, tables, scales, cash registers and wireless access points at three community gardens. The sites will begin implementation in November and move through the end of the project period as follows: November, 2 pop-up farm stands; December and January, 4 pop-up farm stands; February – September, up to 6 pop-up stands per month.
 - a. Progress Made: Over the two-year grant period there was \$17,362 in direct sales at 117 pop-up farm stands in 11 different locations throughout the Phoenix area, supporting 20 local urban gardeners and farmers.
 - b. Impact on Community: The majority of the 11 farm stand locations were in low-income communities where food access is limited. From South Phoenix to the Maryvale neighborhood in West Phoenix, the pop-up stands gave customers greater access to local fresh produce at affordable prices. Additionally, local immigrant and refugee growers were able to access new market opportunities to sell their produce and develop a new customer base, gaining additional income.
 - ii. Goal/Objective 2: Provide training, on-site mentorship and technical support in direct sales for small and aspiring producers such that 75% of the beginning farmers involved in these farm stands will have the capacity to operate his or her own business transactions without help by the end of two years of the project.
 - a. Progress Made: Throughout the grant period IRC Phoenix worked with eight refugee growers and 12 urban growers in partnership with Tiger Mountain Foundation (TMF), providing training as well as one-on-one technical assistance on how to sell fresh produce at a farm stand. Growers learned what type of produce sells better based on customer preference, how to set and adjust price points based on seasonality, and how to display produce most effectively to attract customers. By year two, six of the eight refugee growers had made independent produce sales at various established farmers markets throughout the Phoenix area, as well as local corner stores.
 - b. Impact on Community: The customers shopping at the IRC farm stands have come to expect quality local produce each week because of the reliability of the growers. Refugee growers are able to offer customers naturally grown specialty crops, which they are often not able to find at their neighborhood grocery stores. Customers consistently give feedback that the produce they purchase at the IRC farm stand is fresher and of better quality than at any other food retailer in the area. Additionally, the farm stands run by TMF give local youth the

opportunity to learn basic financial skills through produce sales at the farm stand.

iii. Goal/Objective 3: Establish merchant SNAP accounts and operate the “Fresh Fund” incentive program to enable the use of SNAP and other food benefits at these markets.

a. Progress Made: Throughout the grant period 118 SNAP customers were served, spending a total of \$535 in SNAP transactions. Additionally, 281 customers shopped at IRC farm stands redeeming \$4,086 in WIC, FMNP, or FMNP Senior vouchers. IRC disbursed \$1,764 in Fresh Fund incentives for both SNAP and WIC customers enrolled in the Fresh Fund program.

b. Impact on Community: The Fresh Fund incentive program is a strategy used to change consumers’ overall eating habits. The number of customers reached and amount of matched funds disbursed indicate interest among low-income shoppers in consuming fresh produce. As a result, the IRC farm stands make produce accessible to diverse populations that may otherwise have a difficult time finding fresh, culturally appropriate produce at affordable prices with limited transportation.

iv. Goal/Objective 4: Foster the long-term engagement of each community in sustaining these pop-up farm stands by working in cooperation with existing organizations to design and develop each venue, and by providing a stipend to 8 local volunteers to assist in the facilitation of pop-up stands and marketing for growers.

a. Progress Made: In the first year of the grant, IRC partnered with TMF to organize multiple pop-up stand locations in South Phoenix where eight local volunteers assisted in the facilitation of the farm stands and worked with local producers to market their produce. Two of these farm stands, Spaces of Opportunity Garden and the Garden of Tomorrow were very successful and continue to operate today, even after the completion of the grant. Additionally, IRC continues to strengthen its partnership with Mountain Park Health Center, where the IRC New Roots Farm Stand is located each Tuesday, leading to further community engagement. IRC Phoenix has also continued to partner with Maricopa County Department of Public Health to host dietetic intern events focused on healthy eating as well as a biweekly nutrition education information sessions. Nutrition information, healthy eating handouts and recipes in both English and Spanish continue to be available at each pop-up stand.

b. Impact on Community: Community members continue to receive information regarding healthy eating, where to access additional resources from Maricopa County, and detailed information about other market locations offering local fresh food that can be purchased using government benefits such as SNAP, WIC, FMNP, and FMNP Senior vouchers.

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, October 1, 2015). Include further explanation if necessary.

- i. Number of direct jobs created: 8 (paid volunteers assisting with TMF pop-up stands)
- ii. Number of jobs retained: 20 (IRC refugee growers and TMF growers)
- iii. Number of indirect jobs created: 0
- iv. Number of markets expanded: 0
- v. Number of new markets established: 11 (4 IRC-run pop-ups, 7 TMF pop-ups)
- vi. Market sales increased by \$17,362 and increased by See note below.
- vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 20
 - a. Percent Increase: See note below.

*number vi. and vii. cannot be quantified in a percentage as the markets were new as well as the growers. They were not already established at the beginning of the grant period, rather they were created with grant support.

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?

IRC in Phoenix partnered with Tiger Mountain Foundation to operate several pop-up stands in South Phoenix, a low-income area where healthy food access is extremely limited. The population in South Phoenix is one of the most underserved areas in the city and primarily Hispanic. One of the initiatives of TMF is to work with formerly incarcerated and at-risk youth to give them the tools and resources to get back on their feet and be involved in their community. By participating in the operation of the pop-up stands within their own communities, these youth gain valuable skills in financial literacy, entrepreneurial knowledge, and develop a good work ethic. Additionally, the community gains greater access to fresh fruits and vegetables grown directly in their neighborhood. Community members get to know the growers and are ultimately supporting the local economy.

The IRC New Roots Farm Stand is the only farmers market that serves the Maryvale community and accepts both SNAP and WIC/FMNP/FMNP Senior vouchers. As a result, during the grant period the farm stand served a high number of low-income customers coming from diverse ethnic groups. The senior demographic continues to be the fastest growing customer base due to the use of the FMNP Senior vouchers distributed by St. Mary's, the local food bank. Many of these seniors have limited transportation access, so a farm stand located in their immediate neighborhood was crucial to their access to fresh produce. Additionally, the New Roots Farm Stand catered to a large Hispanic population, the largest ethnic demographic in the surrounding neighborhood.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

- i. Who are your community partners?

As mentioned above, IRC Phoenix partnered with Tiger Mountain Foundation in the first year of the grant. IRC Phoenix also partnered with Tanner Terrace and Phoenician Palms, two primarily low-income apartment buildings where many IRC clients reside. IRC Phoenix continues to partner with Mountain Park Health Center to host the weekly New Roots Farm Stand as well as Maricopa County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) to conduct nutrition education information sessions and food demonstrations. IRC Phoenix also collaborated with the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension nutrition team to

provide healthy food samples and nutrition resources at the pop-up farm stands. The New Roots team also operated pop-up stands at the semi-annual World Bazaar Community Market. Hosting event partners for World Bazaar include Local First Arizona, the City of Phoenix, Vitalyst Health Foundation, Valley Metro, and LISC.

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

TMF was a key partner in facilitating the pop-up farm stands in year one, successfully reaching a new demographic and establishing a healthy community presence in South Phoenix. Mountain Park Health Center was a tremendous supporter of the project by actively promoting the New Roots Farm Stand and referring many of their clients from their onsite health and WIC clinics. Additionally, MCDPH staff have conducted SNAP outreach, distributed promotional materials, provided nutrition trainings, and food demonstrations at the New Roots Farm Stand at Mountain Park. All of these partners have contributed to the overall success of the farm stand project by providing the physical space to hold the pop-up stands, promotional outreach, as well as on-site technical assistance and support.

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

Several of the TMF run pop-up stands have become regular farm stands as well as the weekly IRC New Roots Farm Stand at Mountain Park and the semi-annual World Bazaar Community Market. IRC Phoenix will continue to partner with these organizations to host pop-up stands, facilitate trainings and provide educational resources.

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

Not applicable

- 6. Have you publicized any results yet?*

Not applicable

- i. If yes, how did you publicize the results?
- ii. To whom did you publicize the results?
- iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach?

*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?

As part of IRC's FINI-funded Fresh Fund program, the office conducted short surveys at the New Roots Farm Stand at Mountain Park. IRC also received word of mouth feedback from community members.

- ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?

Multiple customers said they were happy to be able to find specialty produce at the farm stand that is not available at the regular grocery store. Customers also said the quality and freshness of the vegetables at the farm stand was much better than at other retailers. Farm stand shoppers liked that they could use their SNAP benefits and get fresh produce for half the price. One mother of six stated, "This market makes my life so much easier. I can get all these vegetables for cheap and I know my kids will be healthy."

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).

One of the biggest lessons learned through this project is the importance of collaborating with partners. Without the support of Tiger Mountain Foundation, Mountain Park Health Center and Maricopa County Department of Public Health, it would have been very difficult to get the project off the ground. It was imperative to not only have the support of the organizations who hosted the pop-up farm stand sites in terms of physical space, but also in the promotion of the project. Additionally, pop-up stands that were consistently held at the same location weekly had better customer turnout and sales for the growers.

Through this project, IRC Phoenix learned that consistent marketing and promotion was a key component in developing a successful farm stand. The New Roots Farm Stand at Mountain Park, for example, was one of the most successful farm stands because it was advertised regularly throughout the community and among the staff at Mountain Park Health Center and Maricopa County Department of Public Health. Customers could expect the New Roots Farm Stand to operate every Tuesday during the same hours. However, having a consistent schedule and location is only part of maintaining a successful market outlet; the other key component is continuous outreach over time. For most new markets, it takes a long period of time to build up support and a decent customer base, so it is important for new markets to understand who the customer base

is and what their needs are. IRC Phoenix recognized that the underserved community in Maryvale wanted access to specific types of specialty fruits and vegetables they could not find at the grocery store. Shoppers also expressed a desire for organic produce, but it also needed to be affordable. With this information IRC Phoenix was able to work with refugee growers to provide appropriate produce to the New Roots Farm Stand. The FINI Fresh Fund incentive program addressed the affordability concern for customers who would not normally be able to afford fresh organic produce. Offering a dollar for dollar match, up to ten dollars a day, for SNAP and WIC customers at the farm stand alleviated the price burden often faced by low-income communities relying on food benefits, especially families.

Some of the challenges of running pop-up farm stands were related to a lack of advertising prior to the pop-up. For example, pop-up farm stands at apartment buildings as well as one-off sites had low customer turnout and therefore lower sales. Many growers did not want to continue to sell at slower sites because they would then lose not only valuable income, but their time as well. Additionally, working with new growers with limited selling experience occasionally resulted in inconsistent products. By the end of grant year one, however, after various market trainings and technical assistance, the growers were able to provide the farm stands with reliable and consistent products.

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

The sales at the farm stands were lower than anticipated; partly because the program was not able to operate farm stands on the urban farm and community garden sites proposed in the narrative. As a result, the farm stands had to be held at different locations that were not as conducive to selling produce. Furthermore, IRC Phoenix lost two critical pieces of land unexpectedly during the project. Many IRC growers lost a significant amount of their crops, which were then not sold at the pop-up stands. Despite losing this land, IRC Phoenix has continued to operate the New Roots Farm Stand at Mountain Park and aggregate produce from refugee growers on a weekly basis with its three existing community gardens.

- 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:

For others who want to implement a similar project, the IRC Phoenix recommends taking time to understand the needs of the communities the program will be working in. It is very important to know the types of produce that are appropriate for the demographics and culture of the customers. These needs may change over time, so it is important to regularly ask for customer feedback and input. Working with diverse cultures also can lead to issues with language barriers, so it is essential to have staff or volunteers that can communicate with customers who may be non-English speakers, thereby making them feel welcome and making the farm stand more inviting. Translating market flyers and other promotional material also helps reach more customers.

Having a nutrition education component regularly at the farm stand was extremely valuable. Customers appreciated that they could pick up healthy recipes in multiple languages and had access to additional healthy resources they may not have otherwise known about. Meeting the growers and being able to have a conversation about where they are from, how they came to the United States, and what they grow was an appeal to customers at the farm stand. Additionally, sampling unfamiliar produce on-site encouraged customers to try something new, which they often purchased as a result.

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.

IRC Phoenix continues to strengthen the New Roots program within three community garden sites as well as a new partnership with an urban farm. Staff has recruited a number of new growers excited to start the program and earn supplemental income for their families. Providing market opportunities to refugee and immigrant growers is at the forefront of the New Roots program. The New Roots Farm Stand at Mountain Park is still operating on a regular basis, as is the biannual World Bazaar Community Market. Development of a new farm stand at the New Roots Aquaponics site is also underway with the goal of reaching a new populations and giving new growers a chance to participate. Additionally, IRC Phoenix continues to partner closely with Maricopa County Department of Public Health to provide nutrition education and healthy food resources to the greater community at all farm stand locations.

- 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? No