

**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.

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| Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i> | September 30, 2015 – September 29, 2017 |
| Authorized Representative Name: | Carla Roof, Acting Operations Manager |
| Authorized Representative Phone: | (803) 581-2123 Ext. 239 |
| Authorized Representative Email: | croof@chester.sc.gov |
| Recipient Organization Name: | City of Chester |
| Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement: | Chester Farmers and Artisans Market Fresh2You |
| Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i> | 15FMPPSC-157 |
| Year Grant was Awarded: | 2015 |
| Project City/State: | Chester, South Carolina |
| Total Awarded Budget: | \$ 35,767.00 |

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: Theodore Feaster, Market Manager; Email: tfeaster@chester.sc.gov; Phone: (803) 581-7429

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0581-0287. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 4 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable sex, marital status, or familial status, parental status religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program (not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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:** Lease and operate a vehicle equipped with EBT/SNAP equipment, trained personnel and promotional logos to enable access to the Farmer’s Market, and local produce for all members of the Chester community by November 1, 2015.

- a. **Progress Made:** At the outset of the project, a 24-month contract with Ford Motor Co. was established to lease a Ford Edge that serves as the Fresh2You mobile market. During the first quarter, all DMV transactions were completed, and decals and accessories were purchased and installed. The vehicle is kept at the Farmers Market, and driven and coordinated by the Farmers Market Manager. The “wrapped” vehicle serves as a marketing and advertising tool. During the full grant period, over 375 home deliveries were made of participating farmers’ products to clients with limited access issues. During the grant period, considerable delay was experienced by the City to obtain the EBT-SNAP certificate/license and the machine as it took a longer than anticipated amount of time to transfer a previous license by the vendor to the City. Machine and license were obtained in July 2017 in the final phase of the project. More on this problem is described in Point 9 in this report.

- b. **Impact on Community:** The visibility and efforts involving the Fresh2You mobile market generated favorable impact from the community, both individuals and community organizations. Local non-profits became interested in connecting Fresh2You and the Farmers Market with walkability initiatives including the Walk Chester Plan, adopted by City Council during 2016. During high season, the Fresh2You mobile market enabled 40 home deliveries in 2016 and 74 in 2017 to new customers in Chester County.

- ii. **Goal/Objective 2:** Develop marketing plan for outreach to primary target group, i.e. recipients of SNAP and Senior Vouchers with limited access in Chester County to provide delivery of Farmers’ Market produce by November 30, 2015.

- a. **Progress Made:** A marketing plan for the primary target group was developed during the first 2 quarters of the project period, in dialogue with the Farmers Market Manager, Parks and Recreation staff and farmers. Specific components of the plan include the use of the wrapped Fresh2You vehicle (whether parked or in circulation, it serves to “market the market”); signage at the Market, flyers, City website and municipal TV, local newspaper, radio spots, networking, public presentations, local festivals and tourism activities, visits to senior citizen center.

- b. **Impact on Community:** The marketing plan has served to inform the broader Chester community on an ongoing basis about the availability of the Fresh2You

mobile market and access to SNAP/EBT and Senior Vouchers. It has also contributed to enhance local producers' client base.

iii. **Goal/Objective 3:** Develop marketing plan for outreach to other members of the Chester County community with limited access issues to provide delivery of Farmers' market produce by December 31, 2015.

a. **Progress Made:** The marketing plan used for Goal/Objective 3 also assisted outreach and advertising to the broader target group. Advertising activities aimed at the County level to reach current and potential clients of the participating farmers and introduce the mobile Fresh2You market. Farmers Market team developed record keeping sheets for the project that captured ethnic, age group and pertinent demographic data.

b. **Impact on Community:** The primary impacts of the advertising plan on this target group involved increased opportunities to receive healthy and affordable locally produced food via the Fresh2You mobile market, in addition to enhanced sales opportunities for local farmers. Advertising focused on promoting the mobile market as an opportunity to resolve physical access limitations for those community members unable to travel to downtown Chester to shop at the Farmers and Artisans Market.

iv. **Goal/Objective:** Through improved equipment and advertising, increase farmers' participation and opportunities for diversified products from 10 to 25 and 25% of the Farmers Market agricultural vendors' consumer base by September 2017.

a. **Progress Made:** All equipment included in this grant was purchased: freezer, refrigerated display case, ice machine, ice crusher, shaver, bin and mini-refrigerator. The equipment enabled greater diversification of locally produced food for sale at the Farmers and Artisans Market, a feature that was then included in advertising. The advertising plan included distribution at convenience stores, Department of Social Services, City Hall, local businesses, Farmers Market, Senior Citizen centers, local non-profits, and churches. Packing boxes and materials were purchased and aided the efficient and sanitary delivery of the farmers' produce.

b. **Impact on Community:** The addition of the refrigerated display case and ice machine continues to enable diversified local food products' availability at the Farmers and Artisans Market and to keep farmers' produce for delivery. For instance, in addition to fruits and vegetables, new locally produced options such as eggs, cheese and seafood have now been introduced. The addition of the equipment has also enabled the Farmers and Artisans Market to serve as an event space that the City's Parks and Recreation Department rents to local organizations. A new commercial kitchen project located next door to the Farmers Market will benefit as well from the equipment. The extended advertising and promotion was instrumental in reaching current and new visitors and users of the Farmers Market services.

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: 1 part time driver; income for 20 farmers
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: 5 jobs, 2 volunteers
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: 4 Farmers Assistants
 - iv. Number of markets expanded: 1
 - v. Number of new markets established: 0
 - vi. Market sales increased by \$ \$6,840 (\$3,500 to \$10,340) and increased by 195%
 - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 20 farmers and their families have benefitted from the project during the grant period.
 - a. Percent Increase: A 100% increase was achieved during the project period. (10 local farmers at project outset, 20 local farmers participating by project end).

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? The Fresh2You vehicle, advertising and promotion, new diversified food products at the market, and new equipment to display and refrigerate the fish, vegetables and eggs that have become available during the grant period have contributed to attract Chester Community Garden participants and ministerial food pantries staff and users—all of which serve the low income and low access populations. The new ice and refrigerator equipment also contributed to community groups rental of the space for activities events, including senior women and youth exercise classes, 4H events, and the local Chamber of Commerce, attracting new and old businesses and their affiliates to visit the Farmers Market. During 2016, the City partnered with the Chester County School District to obtain funds from Duke Energy for a youth art mural project. Working with a Claflin University painting professor, the middle and high school students learned to design and produce exterior wall panels for the Market, resulting in youth engagement and drawing youth and families to the Market.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.
 - i. Who are your community partners? Key community partners include: Clemson Extension; Chester County 4-H; Chester Ministerial Association; Chester County School District; Eat Smart Move More Coalition; Upper Midlands Rural Health Network; Hazel Pittman Center; Organic Helpers; Chester County Career Center.
 - ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the FMPP project? The community partners have been an essential component in the promotion of the Fresh2You project. Their role has included connecting the Farmers and Artisans Market and farmers in place-making activities, regional and local events including agricultural tourism, advertising and promotion, volunteer support and linking the Farmers and Artisans Market to the Chester Walkability Plan.
 - iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMPP grant? The FMPP project, which became an ongoing agenda point during meetings with a local coalition of health and grassroots organizations, generated enthusiastic support from local organizations, who initiated

efforts to develop the Farmers Market into a walkability “hub” in conjunction with a new Walk Chester Plan adopted by Chester City Council in 2016. A walkability signage effort is underway where the Farmers’ market will be the central destination in the greater Downtown Chester vicinity. Shared interest has been sparked to raise the profile of the Farmers Market as a center of health and wellness, promising more foot traffic and sales for local farmers. Partnership has included promotion and grant work.

5. Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the FMPP project? No.
6. Have you publicized any results yet?*

 - i. If yes, how did you publicize the results? Chester News and Reporter, local radio, local and state meetings, municipal tv, local radio, presentations to community groups, schools, senior centers; City website.
 - ii. To whom did you publicize the results? Project updates were provided during City Council meetings in 2016 and 2017 which included City officials, staff and the public and were televised on the municipal TV station; community health advocates; farmers; rural and urban radio audiences; visitors and tourists during regional Ag/Art events and local festivals.
 - iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? During the grant period, Approximately 4,000 directly and 6,000 indirectly.

*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). The wrapped Fresh2You vehicle photos were attached to earlier reports. Please find photo of new Fresh2You tote bags and flyers.

7. Have you collected any feedback from your community and additional stakeholders about your work?
 - i. If so, how did you collect the information? During the grant period, feedback was collected mainly by the Farmers Market Manager during his contact with farmers, Farmers Market visitors and clients, and participation in state, regional and local events.
 - ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)? Overall comments from farmers relate to their interest in “visibility, visibility, visibility, which is what Fresh2You offers.” Other comments include “Fresh2You offers fresh produce to people that aren’t able to make it to the market—thank you!” A lot of public reaction to the Fresh2You vehicle itself is very positive due to its colorful and tasteful logos.
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? While Income Generation was not a stated goal of the project at the outset, during implementation \$150 was generated by farmers who used Fresh2You delivery service and paid a 10% fee for produce delivered. These funds went toward covering fuel costs of the mobile market. \$700 was generated through Farmers Market rentals for events, and \$ 450 from Farmers' registration fees. These funds went to general operating costs of the Farmers Market.

9. Lessons Learned:

- i. Summarize any lessons learned. They should draw on positive experiences (e.g. clever ideas that improved project efficiency or saved money) and negative experiences (e.g. what did not go well and what needs to be changed). The FMPP provided a strategic pilot opportunity for the City of Chester. The size of the grant and terms of cooperation were compatible to a recently established Farmers and Artisans Market in a small rural city with Chester's indicators. This project served as a "school" and enhanced internal understanding of our community's needs and interest in healthy locally produced food and the connection to agriculture, local farmers and the Farmers and Artisans Market. As a team, we developed marketing plans and measurement tools that will continue to assist in the overall development of the Market as a socio- economic development effort. A considerable number of Fresh2You customers use Senior Vouchers, which the Mobile Market and farmers accept. Overall, the project has served to raise awareness about access and inclusion issues and contributed to the capacity to respond through the Fresh2You mobile market, advertising and promotional visits to marginalized communities.

Positive: The mobile market vehicle with bright logos is an excellent tool for marketing and advertising Fresh2You, to make deliveries of locally grown produce to residents with limited access issues; to facilitate Farmers Market Manager visits to local farmers; and contributes to local farmer's ability to increase their client base. The mobile market is a tangible resource for health and wellness, as well as economic development that generates a favorable community response. As mentioned above, a positive aspect is that the Fresh2You project contributed to increased community interest in the Farmers Market, connecting Fresh2You to the Chester Walk Plan and actions, and developing the Farmers Market into a "hub" and community center for health and wellness, especially related to Chester's agricultural heritage.

Negative: While making local produce accessible through the possibility to use SNAP/EBT on the vehicle and at the Market, obstacles occurred during the grant period. Unfortunately, the City's Farmers and Artisans Market had an unexpected delay in receiving the SNAP certificate/license. Knowing that it was coming soon, some preliminary advertising began. However, the delay was prolonged and it affected the community response in relation to SNAP/EBT. Once the SNAP/EBT machine and certificate situation was resolved, the Farmers Market Manager and farmers discovered then that the Chester community tended to use SNAP/EBT for more expensive food items, such as meat, rather than fresh vegetables and fruits.

- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving: The delays experienced in relation to the SNAP/EBT machine, despite energetic attempts made by the City and Farmers Market to resolve this situation, and subsequent effects on outreach and engagement with the primary target group were the cause of disappointment for the pilot project goals. It could have been important to partner the Fresh2You project with a local organization specifically dedicated to education and outreach to the primary target group. Moreover, the SNAP/EBT certificate and machine should be in place before the project begins.
- 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:
The communication with FMPP staff has been key in the administration of the project and partnership. Project personnel are supportive and provide ongoing orientation throughout the grant period. We experienced 4 different program officers during the grant period, and each provided excellent professional support. Only suggestion would be to take full advantage of this open communication, including the phone, for consultations.

10. Future Work:

- i. How will you continue the work of this project beyond the performance period? In other words, how will you parlay the results of your project's work to benefit future community goals and initiatives? Include information about community impact and outreach, anticipated increases in markets and/or sales, estimated number of jobs retained/created, and any other information you'd like to share about the future of your project. The Farmers and Artisans Market site includes an upcoming commercial kitchen. Recently, a USDA RDBG grant was obtained to develop a pavilion and cleaning shed at the Market, making it a viable option for outdoor events as well as expanding the market space. Based on the successes of the pilot phase, the City Council has approved the purchase of a vehicle to serve as the permanent mobile market. The new projects taking place at the Farmers and Artisans Market will benefit farmers with increased foot traffic and heightened visibility. Plans are underway to develop the Farmers Market the "hub" of a signage effort organized by local health organizations to promote walkability, focusing on twelve destinations in the Downtown Chester vicinity.
- 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? More research and planning around the issues outlined in point 9, ii; identify partnership with a local or regional health and nutrition education group to raise community awareness about the use of SNAP-EBT for locally grown healthy food and ways to prepare it. (could connect with upcoming commercial kitchen during 2018)

FRESH 2 YOU



111 Columbia Street, Chester, SC 29706

May 2016

Mobile Market is here!

Beginning in May, the City of Chester's Farmers & Artisans Market will begin taking orders and making deliveries to our customers in Chester County. The vehicle was obtained with our customers in mind. Especially those who are unable to get to the Market but would like fresh, local produce.

SNAP EBT WILL BE ACCEPTED

The Market aims to raise awareness about nutritious eating, make healthy food affordable and accessible to all members of the community.

This project was supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service through grant 15FMPPSC0157



Farmers Market Delivery Vehicle

For more Information contact:

Parks & Recreation
581-7429

or

Market Manager,
Theodore Feaster
444-4320