

**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>	10/1/15 – 9/30/16
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Recipient Organization Name:	Siemen Family Farm
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Mont Lamm Farm to Table Events Greening Eastern WA Food Deserts
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	15-FMPPX-WA0151
Year Grant was Awarded:	2015
Project City/State:	Clayton, WA Spokane County
Total Awarded Budget:	\$99,100

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.

Objective 1, Offer 6 Farm-to-Table events to at least 50 local residents (300 total) at the Mont Lamm Event Center.

- a. We completed all 6 of our Farm-to-Table events, serving over 368 customers, with food and drink provided by 20 local farmer/vendors. These events were able to employ 13 part time employees, and contract with 4 chefs and 2 sous chefs, and 2 prep chefs, a marketer, manager, photographer, website developer and 8 different musicians and 3 singers.
- b. Our community grew! Our farm is now more involved with the local chamber of commerce, with other farmers, our local farmers co-op, as well as the general public. People seem to genuinely appreciate the chance to come to a farm for a farm to table event. Prior to our offering these events farm to table seldom happened. We notice they are coming up more often.

Activity 1: Improve our Commissary Kitchen to be ready to host monthly Farm-to-Table events.

We used money from the grant to make needed improvements in the kitchen to prepare for the Health Department inspection. The Health Department passed the kitchen to allow its use for value added processing by local farmers, and to be used for serving locally prepared food on site. This kitchen serves a large geographic area and there are no other nearby commissary kitchens. The kitchen is fully prepared to host Farm-to-table events! During this last quarter the kitchen was leased to one local farmer to use for processing their value added products for market. They passed their USDA inspection and are planning to sell their homegrown wares at the local market co-op later this fall. Without the support of this grant we would not have been able to manage this and would have tried to operate it without all the necessary regulations in place. We would have failed.

Activity 2: Serve over 300 meals prepared from local food, sourced no further than 50 miles away. Through this grant, over 368 meals were prepared and served with an average of 60 people for each event. All food and drink were sourced through local farmers and producers within a 50 mile radius. Everyone was impressed with the quality and variety of food and drink!

Objective 2, Work with 5-7 chefs in using local farm fresh produce, meat and dairy products

Activity 1: Chef shows participants how to prepare local foods.

We had one chef lead three events, and then three different chefs for the other three meals. There were also 2 sous chefs assisting and 2 prep chefs. At each event chefs worked in the open allowing guests to see what they were doing.

Activity 2: Chefs serve well-prepared food to participants

Throughout each meal the chef would address the guests and explain what they had prepared and how, highlighting how unique the meal was. Printed menus also highlighted which local farms contributed to the meal. The kitchen had a viewing area and allowed guests to watch the preparations of each item. Each chef interacted with the guests throughout the evening inviting questions and comments. Our surveys received positive comments from the guests about this.

Objective 3, Provide experiential activities to participants to increase their knowledge of local foods.

Activity 1: Invite farmers to attend each event explaining:

Farmers were invited to each dinner and then asked to speak about what their farm specializes in, how they grow the food or prepare what was served. Farmers also talked about how participants can gain access to this local food. We were surprised to learn through our surveys that most participants did not understand the value of local food nor how to get it. Typically there were three farmers and 2 vendors at the each event, they explained their farm or business and what they contributed to this evening meal. One farmer who is very active in local food issues mentioned that this event actually made her better understand how important it is and what we were talking about became much clearer. We were surprised however to see that many farmers did not have a good “presence” with things like business cards, internet or other easy to access venues to their product. We also were surprised at how difficult it was to actually purchase local food! We would make a request for something they were selling and when we went to pick “it” up they had often already sold it elsewhere or “forgot” we had requested it. We think there is more work to be done in this area.

Activity 2: Describe differences between local food and food obtained from other sources.

The Mont Lamm managers explained where the food came from and the value of having it sourced locally (economically and nutritionally) and explained the differences between the meal that was made and those you can normally get in a restaurant or prepackaged from a store. This activity raised the interest of the guests in purchasing directly from the farms. Most of the farms have not really set up to sell directly to individuals but have begun to put plans in place to allow for this activity. (They typically just do farmers markets or are part of the new local co-op). Most of the farmers have begun to develop a stronger market presence. To assist with this, the menu cards we produced also named the farms involved and on the Mont Lamm website we also provided a link or at the very least a phone number for each farm. What surprised us was that a number of guests had no idea how to purchase local food and were pleased to find out how to connect with their local farmer!

Activity 3: Invite guests to pick their own salad, see how it is grown and watch a chef prepare it in front of them. We were not able to have participants pick their own salad for a number of reasons ranging from inclement weather at the time, and the logistics with such a large turn out. We also discovered that Washington state has regulations in place for this type of activity and we did not complete their process.

However, having the chefs prepare their meals visible to the guests helped to create the same effect. That coupled with the fact that some of the food did come from the farmers garden helped people to understand the concept of local. Participants were encouraged to walk round the grounds and look at the crops, the turkeys and chickens.

Activity 4: Provide participants a list of places they can access local food in their region.

We asked vendors/farmers to bring their contact info and marketing materials and realized only a few had anything to present! For each event we highlighted each vendor on our website and if possible a link to the vendors website or Facebook page too. With the new Website we have added all the vendors from each F2T. For some farmers we had to work with them to create even a minimum presence, as they did not have anything we could use. To encourage that local contact we invited farmers to “sell” their products at a table at each event. Very few were able to manage this! There is more work needed in this area.

Objective 4, Increase our ability to market event to local community members

Activity 1: Work with a Marketing expert to develop a marketing plan.

- The Marketing Plan is attached and we have been using the various elements within it. The new web site was developed and launched during April, TV/radio commercials were written with plans in place to produce and air a commercial during each event. As outlined in our marketing plan, we used various social media tools for each event (learning as we go) and have plans to continue to use these tools, linking all our materials (poster, brochures, email, twitter and Facebook) to target different groups of people. Our survey shows however, that the majority of the guests came because of word of mouth. We have seen once folks have attended many are repeat customers! The full survey is attached. We also learned how much more expensive it is to advertise. We had budgeted about 17,500 for a marketing plan, print, tv, radio and website and ended up spending closer to \$19,700. Going forward however with a plan in place and much of our process clearer we can keep these costs lower. Our surveys helped us to know which venue worked for us.

Activity 2: Learn to successfully market the monthly Farm-to-Table events

- As we continued each monthly Farm-To-Table event and improved our advertising and marketing plans, we hope to not only sell out but to find new community members at the event! Each event tends to have 30-48 paying customers. The rest are farmers and invited guests (reporters, and other distinguished guests). Our goal, and budget, needs to have closer to 50 paying customers in order to make the budget work. Our other lesson is how to keep the food within budget. We have found that local food can at times be extraordinarily expensive (not sustainable). Sometimes chef's order or request foods that can be way out of the budget. While we wish to pay living wages and prices for local food it also must be manageable within a budget. We have not yet found that "sweet" spot. We are still learning how to manage that.

Activity 3: Share results of the events to general public

- We use the new web site (<http://montlammevents.com/farm-to-table-events/>) and also added and linked it to a Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=mont%20lamm%20farm%20to%20table%20events> to share photos, comments, vendor contact information, and in general let the public know what we are doing and how we do it. We have already been contacted by other organizations asking for details and how they can improve their efforts in this area. Word is getting out! Interest is growing and we hope to continue this work.

See the culmination of all the surveys attached.

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, 2016). Include further explanation if necessary.

- A. Number of direct jobs created:** 13 part time jobs were created. 4 Chefs, 2 Sous chefs and 2 prep chefs, 8 paid teen workers. In this more remote part of Spokane County it is hard for teens and others to find meaningful work. We appreciate having the trained workers able and ready to support this effort. The teens learned customer service, accountability and how to present a professional face.

B. Number of jobs retained: For each event the same number (or a slight increase) of jobs is planned. Teens and young adults have been trained and used to help serve and support the venue. We will continue to rehire at least 8 of the teens. A local band is hired to play during the dinner. Professional Chefs are also used. We had hoped to get intern chefs involved, however the local community college did not take advantage of our offer inviting them to join us (as paid interns!). We will continue to make this a possibility. Concerning employees, we were able to give a wage increase to our in-house pastry chef from \$11 per hour to \$15 per hour. We've been able to start all of our employees, both last year and in the coming season, at \$11 per hour and hope to give increases before the end of the season based on experience and performance. We hope to employ 10 people this coming season, not including seasonal workers who prepare and work our growing beds.

Our goal has always been to have twice as many upcoming younger workers as we do older workers. We're able to develop a diverse array of skills that make an average potential employee into a more desirable and skilled one for another employer. These include life skills – showing up on time, being thorough, hospitality skills, time management of varying tasks – but also include job specific skills such as learning what defines a clean kitchen and how to manage people in a public space.

C. Number of indirect jobs created: 8 indirect jobs are those at the printer, the event retail sites (for linen, rental glasses, etc.) musicians, a somali, table decorator and support workers providing marketing services.

D. Number of markets expanded: Over 19 farms found new markets as they were exposed to over 300 potential buyers. We also hosted a brewer and wine maker as they premiered their new products. We also wish to continue to order directly from most of them. We have not been able to determine if they have had a chance to sell directly to any of those participants –they do not usually track who their customers are! They also find that each season provides a “new” opportunity. We continue to monitor to see if any of them have changed their marketing practice. As we go back for products and increase their presence on line I expect this will have a positive impact.

E. Number of new markets established: The Mont Lamm Event Center has now firmly expanded into the Farm-to-Table venue and in addition was invited to cater to a local chamber of commerce and other local events.

F. Market sales increased by \$40 and increased by 60%. Our first attempts were under priced at \$25 a ticket and would not be sustainable. The new price is \$65 and people feel it is a fair value for what they receive. Overall we earned \$12,011 on ticket sales. \$1,600 was the most spent on food at one event, \$850 was the low. Our ongoing goal is to keep it around \$900 which we achieved at a recent February 2017 event.

One of the couples attending has quite literally turned their health around completely by the food they consume. Having access to our farmers through these events has helped them consistently achieve their health goals.

One of the most exciting things we hear at every event is “I just didn't know.” Followed with “...that our area could grow these kinds of foods.”, “...that farmers in our area were able to sell to me.”, “that we had accessible organic farms I could go to myself.”

G. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project:

We involved a total of 19 farms, 6 wineries, and 2 distilleries. We'll be able to continue working with all of them but not on any single event. We predict that we'll continue to feature them all. Meat farmers get the bulk at \$300 to \$400 per dinner while our herb farmer averages \$20 - \$40 depending on what the chef wants. We do not have any direct comments from farmers on a change in sales but the Meadery and Bodacious Berries & Brews both experienced more traffic at their shops after an event. We think it's likely because these places in particular have a shop or market stand they vend from and are more accessible to be purchased from. Another contributing factor could be that both of them were featured wine artisans, which makes them more appealing to seek out than someone who grows beets (for example). Consumers are more likely to pursue a specialty drink than they are a specialty beet. That is something we hope to move in favor of the farmers starting this season. Percent Increase: Since we did not have a before picture from our farmers, we are not sure how to capture this accurately. Each farm experienced an increase in sales both because of the events directly purchasing from them, but also later that individuals purchased again from the farms, or looked for their products in the local farmers markets. We had a number of guests mentioned they did not know how to purchase "local" and that they now understood why it was important, and how to do it. 100% of our 19 farms experienced both sales to us but also an increase from our customers.

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?

We invited farmers to the event as guests so that they too experienced how local Chefs work with their local foods and can realize new ways to market what they grow. They also would not usually attend this type of event if it were not for our encouragement. A number of them mentioned to us how much better they understood the importance of marketing and connecting with the local market (local goes both ways!). Each farm to table event hosted about 20 non-paying guests –farmers who provided food, or drink, photographers, musicians, educators, marketers, etc. We felt it was critical to educate everyone involved and indeed many mentioned how differently they see these events after having attended one.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

- a. Who are your community partners? The farmers we contact and work with have become our partners as they learn what the goals are and that they too will be highlighted on the web site. Community members have either heard of the event, have attended and now have joined the movement with their new awareness, or actively support what we are doing. This shows as they spread the word and as they contact us about the next event. Additionally the venues we used for printing and advertising are also much more supportive and aware of this effort.
- b. How have they contributed to the overall results of the FMPP project? While we do pay farmers for the food they contribute, they also work with us on price so we can use their food and expose many new people to it. The farmers have also begun to see how they need to develop their own marketing with business cards, websites and other ways that community members can get in touch with them. We have started working with the local chef organizations to get more chefs involved with our project and that they then learn to use

local foods creatively and in season. We all still need to figure out how to manage this within a workable budget.

- c. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMPP grant? As we build the pool of chefs using local foods and small farms able to connect and offer what they produce, the stronger these local markets will become. We started to purchase local foods from the new local farmers co-op, which offers local foods in one place making it easier to obtain the foods needed for a large meal. In addition we also use our local "Market" which is a co-op store downtown. Each has become excited about what we are doing and we hope to see more avenues like this in our region. We also hope to see more "local" food available in local grocery stores (not just food from Seattle –over 200 miles away!).

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

We have contracted with a marketing expert ([marketing plan attached](#)), to help us develop our approach using both traditional marketing sites (TV & radio), as well as utilizing social media. We have also hired a web site developer to assist with the new web site and a local media company to produce a commercial. Chefs and Sous Chefs were contracted. We also contracted with a local carpenter to help us get our kitchen ready to pass the Health Department Licensing. We also contracted with the photographer.

6. Have you publicized any results yet? YES

- a. If yes, how did you publicize the results? We continue to post pictures and farm contact information on our website and Facebook sites. We also have short videos and stories on Facebook about each of our events. These postings reach between 200-500 people so our following is growing!!
- b. To whom did you publicize the results? "Friends" on Facebook (we now have over 573 friends), over 465 regular participants and community members. We had a story about what we are doing in two local papers!
- c. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? 1,500 with Facebook, email word of mouth and the website.

*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? YES

- a. If so, how did you collect the information? We offered each participant a survey at the end of each event, and on Facebook. We had participants complete a survey (the synopsis is attached). Over 222 of the participants returned survey results reporting that the event met or exceeded their expectations. Several mentioned this was one of the best Farm-to-Tables they had attended. Several had excellent suggestions, which we continue to implement.

- b. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)? Participants wanted to get farmers information more quickly (thus we now have their info entered on the website before the event). Many enjoyed actually hearing from the farms involved and learning how important local can be (economically and nutritionally). A number of individuals mentioned that they did not know how to purchase local foods so we gave a lot of information about that process.
- c. We see this issue of obtaining local foods on a regular basis, as a bigger issue in our community. Many people do not understand local and how to get it. Our participants are fairly well educated and have the means to purchase local foods but still did not know how to do this in a consistent way. For some it was not easy, for others local food was pricey.

8. Budget Summary:

- a. 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:
- b. Did the project generate any income?
 - i. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award? \$12,011 income was generated and used to purchase the food and to purchase additional help.

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 have learned to develop a budget for each event and try to purchase food locally in a more economical way. We are still working on this, as we hope to be more sustainable in doing this. We also have learned how difficult it can be in purchasing local food. Small Farms do not necessarily know how to make their products available and easy for local people to buy from them. We have found that they often know one way to sell their goods (such as a farmers market) so they do not necessarily know how to reach the neighbor, store or local buyer.

 We also learned more about Washington Law in regards to hiring part time people. We originally thought they would all be contract employees but L&I, SUTA, and FUTA taxes were required to be paid for each employee, so we ended up having added budget expenses we had not anticipated.
- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving. The only objective not achieved was having a you-pick your salad as part of the dinner. We were not aware of all the regulations involved in the farm to table type events and felt we were inventing the wheel at times. It is also not easy to get this figured out “ahead of time” since we had to follow Federal Regulations, State regulations and local regulations and at times they contradict or one was seemingly unaware of what the other required. It was time consuming, sometimes expensive and frustrating to manage. So the main advise would be to either find someone already doing what you want to do and pick their brain, if that is not possible try to find a friendly face at the local agency to help sort out what is needed. It will not help 100% but does provide a good start.

- 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:
It was helpful to give each main manager the working budget, discussed how to use it. We also gave all staff, contractors or others timecards to use for keeping track of their hours. We asked the lead manager and main contractors to keep a diary so we could see how time was used and then to decide what time was well spent. Having a photographer and the ability to post things on Facebook also allows for a tracking or history of our progress. The photographer also gives us pictures to use for marketing and future products! We are still learning how to keep creative chefs in line with the budget so we can do this within budget.
- iv. We found that we had developed a “team” of people that worked together to put these events on. Meeting with the team allowed us to discuss pluses and minuses, and how to make each event better. The meetings also allowed us to share the work and out reach we do. We are committed to continuing the team approach! ***We honestly believe that each farm would do better to have a team of people to help make it work better.***

10. Future Work:

- a. **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.**

We have learned so much and gained a lot of good local information. In addition to getting our kitchen licensed and up to standard, and developing so many local relationships, we are able to do more farm to table events. We also plan to do more catering, and we are considering planning educational cooking events. We are very committed to local food, local farms and improving access to each through our events. We also hope to grow more of our own local foods for these venues. We are also very committed to hiring and training young people in our region. We are aware that jobs for them are hard to come by and believe we can provide great training and salaries for our young staff.

With out these funds we would not be able to do many of these events, would not have created solid relationships with local farmers and would not have offered so many exciting experiences for our community (not to mention the local jobs for our young people!!). We now have a road map on how to proceed and can see ways to make it work! Our main goal for the future is to find a way to manage this within and on budget. We want to purchase local foods, hire local talent and provide a quality event with the very least a balanced budget (and some day a profit!!). We also think about becoming a teaching farm not just for events but for farming, marketing and selling and doing so with several other farms.

We have noticed that because of our events that brought farmers in to talk about their farms and products that at least 5 of those farmers are now developing more robust websites inviting the local community to purchase directly, come to the farm for a tour and other events. A number of them have also mentioned that they are redoubling their efforts to make

their farm more profitable and have felt we gave them the encouragement and ideas on how to do so.

We are committed to continuing our Farm to Table events and have found that it has become easier to purchase from at least 7 of the local farms and producers. We continue to invite farmers to bring things both to sell or marketing materials encouraging them to connect directly to the consumer. The dinner guests really enjoy this and we see them asking the farmers to sit with them, or meet with them, to discuss different aspects of food and farm. We also notice that farmers who do value added products (especially drinks) are more aggressive in both marketing and in providing access to their products. As we started this process we almost felt that some farmers just didn't want to sell to the public because we found it so difficult to connect and complete a purchase. Many of those farms have since developed easier access, and have become more accountable to the customer.

b. 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?

Having access to these funds helped us tremendously. We hope these opportunities continue to exist for other farms. While we had a lot in place to make this work it was still a stretch to do this without the grant. We were able to really expand what we are doing in a way that positively and consistently impacts our community in a positive way. We think that farmers need to learn more about marketing and allowing access to their products, it is often not easy unless you happen on the farmers market at the right day and time (many of us do not shop that way!). As I mentioned above we think having a group of small teaching farms joining in partnership with our local Cooperative Extension would help this region tremendously. We hope to explore that idea.