

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

The final performance report summarizes the outcome of your LFPP award objectives. As stated in the LFPP Terms and Conditions, you will not be eligible for future LFPP or Farmers Market Promotion Program grant funding unless all close-out procedures are completed, including satisfactory submission of this final performance report.

This final report will be made available to the public once it is approved by LFPP staff. Write the report in a way that promotes your project's accomplishments, as this document will serve as not only a learning tool, but a promotional tool to support local and regional food programs. Particularly, recipients are expected to provide both qualitative and quantitative results to convey the activities and accomplishments of the work.

The report is limited to 10 pages and is due **within 90 days** of the project's performance period end date, or sooner if the project is complete. Provide answers to each question, or answer "not applicable" where necessary. It is recommended that you email or fax your completed performance report to your assigned grant specialist to avoid delays:

LFPP Phone: 202-720-2731; Email: [USDALFPPQuestions@ams.usda.gov](mailto:USDALFPPQuestions@ams.usda.gov); Fax: 202-720-0300

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

<b>Report Date Range:</b> <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	September 30, 2015 – September 30, 2018
<b>Authorized Representative Name:</b>	Andy Burnes
<b>Authorized Representative Phone:</b>	617-759-1701
<b>Authorized Representative Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@thelivestockinstitute.org">info@thelivestockinstitute.org</a>
<b>Recipient Organization Name:</b>	The Livestock Institute of Southern New England
<b>Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:</b>	Southern New England Meat Processing Initiative
<b>Grant Agreement Number:</b> <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	15 – LFPP – MA - 0111
<b>Year Grant was Awarded:</b>	2015
<b>Project City/State:</b>	Westport, MA
<b>Total Awarded Budget:</b>	\$97,876

LFPP staff may contact you to follow up for long-term success stories. Who may we contact?

- Same Authorized Representative listed above (check if applicable).
- Different individual: Name: Gena Mavuli; Email: gena@thelivestockinstitute.org; Phone: 443.527.0408

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 LFPP staff. If the goals/objectives from the narrative have changed from the grant narrative, please highlight those changes (e.g. “new objective”, “new contact”, “new consultant”, etc.). You may add additional goals/objectives if necessary. For each item below, qualitatively discuss the progress made and indicate the impact on the community, if any.

i. Goal/Objective 1: Purchase and install state-of-the art equipment for the beef and the sheep/pig kill floor that is designed and installed to the highest animal welfare and food safety standards

a. Progress Made: Thanks to LFPP support, equipment was purchased to build a state of the art, humane kill floor. The equipment is key to high-end slaughter and processing, meeting the highest industry standards. Items such as work stations that are able to raise up to process larger animals makes the environment safer for staff and results in higher-quality craftsmanship and final end product. Other items, including restrainers that hold the animals calm and still ensure low-stress on the animals prior to stunning, ensuring humane handling and processing.

This project was successfully completed and opened for business on September 17, 2018. Construction delays due to weather events, material supply chain breakdowns, and local permitting obstacles caused this project to extend well beyond our buffer dates. Nonetheless, we are confident that thanks to our generous funders, including USDA – LFPP team, the hard work of the TLI team has resulted in a state of the art meat-processing facility, changing the game for regional livestock producers and ensuring farming viability for years to come.

b. Impact on Community: The community impact of Meatworks cannot be overstated. While our programs are just beginning, capitalizing on Meatworks presence will be educational programs that bring in students, producers, consumers in a common place and with common goals: more locally produced meat in the local foodshed and livestock production as a viable option in Southern New England. Meatworks will be the foundation for education programs on sales, financial management, meat cutting, student- apprenticeships, and more. Meatworks has the potential to develop a new industry for the region, resulting in highly skilled meat cutters who may choose extend their careers into the restaurant industry, butcher practices, and more. This will help change the way meat is processed and consumed in a variety of locales, and have the net effect of changing consumers understanding of the food system. We have already felt the impacts of Meatworks from the farmers who have utilized the facility, and we anticipate the impacts extending for years to come.

ii. Goal/Objective 2: To enable meat producers in Southern New England to process their products more easily and profitably.

a. Progress Made: The opening of Meatworks, has made the region extremely attractive for producers who work hard for farm sustainability. The facility’s schedule has been fully booked since opening, signaling a significant void in processing options that we are now filling. As our capacity grows, we anticipate demand continuing to grow and fill the facility, thus enabling a wide range of local producers to have lower transportation costs, and a lower carbon footprint.

Benefits of this savings will be felt in the community as a whole.

- b. **Impact on Community:** The impact on the community in the first month of operation has been huge. In the first month alone, we serviced 32 farms, processing 33 head of cattle, 55 pork, 1 veal, and 15 lambs. When compared to other regional processing options and transportation costs, in these early stages of operation Meatworks has saved regional farmers an estimated total of \$15,000 in transport expenses in September alone. Our projections show that farmers in our region may save a combined total of over \$200,000 in our first year of operation, and this number will grow as Meatworks capacity increases.
  
- iii. **Goal/Objective 3: To strengthen the broader agriculture sector through increased economic stimulus from meat producers and their suppliers.**
  - A. **Progress Made:** By constructing Meatworks, TLI has provided an instant economic boost for any regional producers who choose to process with Meatworks, due to the transportation cost-savings and our unique processing components including a state-of-the art animal tracking system and custom cutting capabilities. We envision this benefit will only grow as our capacity increases and customers begin to reap the benefits of production analysis and make beneficial changes to their operations. These benefits will be seen in the long-term, but tangible and measurable over time. Our market research has shown that there is significant demand for our services, and our experience in the first month of operation has proved those projections to be true.
  
  - B. **Impact on Community:** Savings of the above mentioned \$15,000 means those funds are likely being reinvested in those small farms, stimulating the local economy through the employment of on-farm help, products to support the farm, or services the farm needs. We estimate a cost savings of \$150 - \$300 per animal in transportation costs, which is estimated at \$1.04 million dollars in combined producer savings during the year once the facility is at full capacity. These funds will be available to go back into the local economy and enhance producer sustainability in Southern New England.
  
- iv. **To make sustainably raised and humanely slaughtered meat more accessible to the local community.**

As Meatworks opens, our store has brought in significant interest from consumers, buyers, and community supporters. Given the later-than-anticipated opening of Meatworks, we have strategically decided to postpone the opening of our retail space to accommodate the sustainable growth of our processing department. In the meantime, we have listed local farms on our website where consumers can contact farmers to access local meat. This comprehensive resource will grow as the years come and will establish Meatworks as the go-to resource for local farms while establishing

a way for consumers to connect directly to local farms.

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: 23
  - ii. Number of jobs retained: 2
  - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: Unknown. Since additional jobs will be the result of farmers expanding their operations due to our local processing options, we will be able to estimate this impact within a year of operations, as we gain statistics from local producers on their operations.
  - iv. Number of markets expanded: We intend to expand the market for local meat through the Meatworks retail store, we will have more information on this within a year or two. As capacity ramps up, we gain more insight into our regional producers, we'll be able to assemble a plan for market expansion.
  - v. Number of new markets established: N/A
  - vi. Market sales increased by \$insert dollars and increased by insert percentage%. N/A
  - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project:

a. Percent Increase: In the first month of operation, September 2018, we served 32 producers. This number has grown each month thus far, and we anticipate that to be the trend throughout 2019.

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 fully intend to reach new populations as we increase outreach and impact of the project, into 2019 and beyond. As we make meat available in the retail store, we intend to accept SNAP benefits and work on a strategy to contribute to local food hubs in New Bedford and Fall River. We have had preliminary conversations with a local nonprofit, Coastal Foodshed, to establish a regional Food Hub once our respective organizations are ready for such an agreement. Further, our outreach is aimed at all regional farmers, including networks such as the Northeast Farmers of Color, to ensure our education programs are as inclusive and diverse as our region.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.
  - i. Who are your community partners?

Our community partners include: Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership (SEMAP), Coastal Foodshed, Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, MA Farm Bureau, The Carrot Project, Bristol County Agricultural High School, Greater New Bedford Vocational Technical High School, Westport Land Trust, Dartmouth Land Trust, and New Entry Sustainable Farming. We have a wide network of supporters including individual consultants, university extension programs, and food system leaders who all play support, promotional, or advisory roles when needed.

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

Our partners have played key supporting roles within the community, advocating, connecting and helping us envision future programs. Community support was key to ensuring regional and local

governmental support and ensuring the smooth transition through various zoning, permitting, and financing stages. We are forever grateful for our location in a right-to-farm community that understands the needs of producers, farmers, and consumers who participate in local food systems.

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

Due to the community's enthusiasm, our own strategy work, and the outreach we have performed, we have a strong vision for both Meatworks and TLI's education programs that will leverage the presence of Meatworks in the community. Our future programs include trainings for producers and the community on meat cuts, apprenticeships with local agricultural and technical high schools, financial planning workshops, and producer training programs. The presence of Meatworks is the cornerstone of our education work, without which none of our education programs would be possible.

5. Did you use contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project?

The construction of Meatworks was completed by a construction company Cape Building Systems, and their subcontractors. Without this hard-working building crew, Meatworks would not be operational today. LFPP funds supported the purchase of high-quality kill-floor equipment, a vital component of the entire facility. This equipment ensured that the kill floor equipment met the highest possible standards.

6. Have you publicized any results yet?\*
- i. If yes, how did you publicize the results?

We have publicized the construction and opening of Meatworks through several events and publications: VIP tour, Ribbon Cutting, and Celebration Picnic. We have had media coverage from WBUR, the Standard Times, and anticipate coverage from Edible Southcoast in 2019. We have not publicized the statistics of producers through the facility at this time. In early 2019, we intend to compile this data for the first four months, September – December 2018 and share with the community.

- ii. To whom did you publicize the results?

Meatworks' opening was publicized to the public, legislators and government officials, along with our specific partners and supporters.

- iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach?

Our community outreach programs reach 1380 people through electronic newsletters and social media. Included in this list are producers, community members, government officials, and allied organizations. Radio publicity via WBUR reaches a wide audience throughout eastern Massachusetts.

\*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).

Newsletters can be seen at these links:

[https://mailchi.mp/36f86c214487/take-a-look-at-whats-happening-at-meatworks?e=\[UNIQID\]](https://mailchi.mp/36f86c214487/take-a-look-at-whats-happening-at-meatworks?e=[UNIQID])

and

<https://us16.campaign-archive.com/?u=b9a2997dcd3cbb2d91d5fd4c&id=ac454f9095>

7. Have you collected any feedback from your community and additional stakeholders about your work?

We are currently in the process of collecting information and feedback from producers, which will compile data from the first 4 months of operation, September – December 2018. We are creating a structured database to gather a log information form producers and will then utilize that information to better serve our constituents.

- i. If so, how did you collect the information?

We have designed a series of questions to ask each producer, as we also thank them for their support of our work. We will leave these questions open-ended, to ensure that farmers have the opportunity to discuss the matters that are most important to them, allowing us to best respond to their needs through Meatworks services and our educational programs.

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

8. Budget Summary:

- i. As part of the LFPP closeout procedures, you are required to submit the SF-425 (Final Federal Financial Report). Check here if you have completed the SF-425 and are submitting it with this report:
  - ii. Did the project generate any income?
    - a. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award?

Meatworks generated \$4,217 in September 2018; no funds were generated prior to this. This income was due to animal processing and does not account for all animals processed during the month, rather it includes just the animals that were processed and picked up by the producer. Some of the animals processed in September were not picked up until October; the associated income will be included in October's data.

These funds have gone back into the facility, to cover staff and start-up costs. During our first month of operation, we income did not match expenses, but we anticipate covering our costs from income by the end of the year 2018. As of the writing of this report, we are on pace to meet that goal.

9. Lessons Learned:

- i. Summarize any lessons learned. Draw from 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).

The bulk of this project and installation went quite smoothly, as we were lucky to have a flexibly construction company and subcontractors who were able to help as needed. Still, we would recommend the following to those looking to replicate this project.

1. We chose to purchase Kentmaster meat saws as those are low-cost alternative to other brands. We purchased three saws, and had issues with two of them. The reset boxes weren't designed for the wash

down environment as they were not waterproof. To remedy this, our electricians had to procure new boxes to install. Also, the plugs for the saws were not rated for the proper voltage of 480 and the electricians had to replace the plugs to meet the voltage needs of the facility. That delayed us 2 weeks and added prorated fees to the scope of work, costing an estimated increase of \$3000.

2. Meatworks would have benefitted from more installation assistance from either the manufacturer or vendor, Ultrasource, who sold the equipment, to ensure that we had complete knowledge of how it functions. A representative who is familiar with all the equipment purchased, including installation, functioning, maintenance and repair, would help a team start off smoothly and have questions answered immediately. We recommend ensuring an on-site representative during the first days or week of operation is part of the initial contract. The call-in customer service is very useful after the first weeks of start-up.
3. We recommend evaluating staff skills and ensuring proper equipment training from the manufacturer during the first days of operation. Meatworks was lucky to have skilled staff who knew the equipment well, and our new staff needed detailed training including the specifics of the proper maintenance details, such as grease types. These details are key to the proper usage of the various knives, saws, and other equipment that has extremely detailed maintenance protocol.

The construction, financing, and execution of Meatworks has demonstrated to us the deep need for collaboration amongst a passionate group of community members, government officials, visionary financial institutions, and forward-thinking donors. Without any of these actors, Meatworks would not be constructed today. The importance of government officials truly understanding the communities they represent and then advocating for them in the local system is key to our success. Donor foundations and large individual donors provided key start-up funds for the project, allowing our ideas to get off the ground and enabling our team to raise more funds to make Meatworks a reality.

Further, we were fortunate to have a construction firm passionate about our work embark upon this journey with us. While had never built a meat processing facility like this, they did have significant experience in fish processing facilities which made them the best candidate for the job in our region. While this firm underwent their own leadership challenges during the construction, they were committed to completing this project and proved to be fantastic partners in this vision.

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

While we did achieve our goals, the timeline was delayed beyond our initial expectations with LFPP funding. We are thankful for the vision of the LFPP team as their extensions allowed us to successfully complete construction of Meatworks in September 2018. Construction projects are subject to many outside factors that influence the timeline of the project, and flexibility with our funders has been extremely important.

- 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:

TLI benefitted greatly from strategic partnerships including governmental, community, and allied organizational support. Undergoing such a project is truly a community endeavor, and this would not have been possible without the wide range of advocates in our community.

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.

While LFPP funding is complete, the work of Meatworks and TLI is just beginning. The opening of the facility is a milestone, yet it's truly a starting point for the work that is to come as we strive to offer high-end meat processing and producer-facing education initiatives. Meatworks is the foundation of our work, allowing us to provide education and training opportunities that are unparalleled in the region.

TLI and Meatworks employment is currently at 23 and we anticipate adding 2 -3 more jobs by the end of 2019. The effect of jobs in the community, representing growth of producers who attend our seminars and utilize Meatworks for processing, may be measured in 2019, upon gather data directly from farmers. While we do anticipate the growth of regional farms, we cannot as of the writing make any accurate predictions.

Our education initiatives for 2019 are quite robust, thanks to Meatworks presence. In 2019, we plan to execute the following:

- SNE Livestock Conference, attendance of 250+
- 2-part financial planning seminars, online financial planning tools
- Roundtable discussions with allied organizations and land trusts, exploring ways to promote regenerative grazing practices on conservation land
- Producer-facing meat-cutting workshop
- Student-facing meat-cutting workshop
- Apprenticeship program with vocational high school culinary program

Further, in 2019 we anticipate the launch of the Meatworks store which will expand markets and open opportunities for local producers. We anticipate facilitating sales to larger businesses, institutions, and playing a key role in utilizing more local meat products in our regional food system, thus strengthening producer viability and our local food shed as a whole. Resiliency in the food system is a key to longevity, and Meatworks is playing a key role in ensuring our region is strong in the facing of changing factors.

- 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?

As we grow our education programs in concert with Meatworks and the retail store, high-efficiency energy sources may be necessary expenditures. Our current electric costs are extremely high and may be a challenge to fully fund in perpetuity. Energy solutions such as solar panels would save on monthly expenses, allowing us to redirect funds to program support and execution.

We are excited about the many possibilities for growth, expansion, and service to the farming community that Meatworks signifies and are eager to move on to the next phase as we continue to build programs with a wide range of support. We appreciate the ongoing support of the LFPP team throughout this project.