

***Farmers Market Promotion Program***  
***Final Performance Report***  
***For the Period of October 1, 2014 –***

***30-Sep-16***

***Date:*** 19-Dec-16  
***Recipient Name:*** City of Brewton, Alabama  
***Project Title:*** Brewton Choo-choo Farmers' Market Expansion  
***Grant Number:*** 12-25-G- 14-FMPPX-AL-0005 AL-032  
***Project Location:*** Brewton, Alabama  
***Year of Grant Award:*** 2014  
***Amount Awarded:*** \$79,332  
***Contact:*** Connie Baggett, Director of Program Management, cbaggett@cityofbrewton.org; 251.809.177

***Program Summary:***

Provide a brief summary regarding the goals and objectives, activities performed, beneficiaries, collaborators, and your most impressive (result) measurement.

The goal of the project was to expand the market through increased marketing, outreach to underserved populations, incentives for consumers and vendors and live entertainment. The market manager invested heavily in billboards, print and social media promotions to make the public aware of the market to significant success. Live entertainment figured prominently in the effort, as did collaboration with the local chamber of commerce, city events and multiple non-profits in the city. John L. Fisher Community Center helped in recruiting vendors as well as promoting the market at their events. Compassion for Brewton provided free transportation to underserved areas as well as vendor recruiting. The local Humane Society helped with outreach, as well as local chapters of Girl and Boy Scouts. Vendors with fresh produce participated at no cost, and most vendors reported increased sales as the grant period progressed. The most impressive measurement is the number of consumers attending in an average month, up from the baseline of 20 shoppers per

***Goals and Objectives:***

Describe the general goals and objectives (scope) of the project: EXAMPLES - to increase sales of healthy foods to low income participants by 50 new customers per week; to increase farmer income by 10% through encouraging use of SNAP/EBT at the market; to increase awareness of the availability for healthy food to all demographic groups within the immediate area of the market.

Indicate the need for the grant project prior to the implementation of grant activities.

Objective/Activity 1.1: Implement an advertising and publicity program utilizing multi-media promotions to increase market reach and capacity; Objective/Activity 1.2: Provide live entertainment for market days; Objective/Activity 1.3: Provide incentives for produce vendors to participate in the market; Goal 2: To expand the market to produce vendors; Objective/Activity 2.1: Provide incentives for consumers ; Goal 3: Implement training programs for vendors and cooking

## ***Activities:***

Describe the activities used to achieve the goals and objectives. This should include measurement of any baseline data. Include significant contribution/roles(s) of project partners.

Marketing included purchase of billboards, cooperative efforts with local events, social media marketing, outreach through local non-profits, training sessions with Cooperative Extension Service, newsletters and mass media outreach. Entertainment at the market included musical acts, artists, inflatable slides and other arts and crafts activities. Managers kept market session totals of consumer visits to the market and interviewed vendors regarding sales totals during the market season. Social media outreach was monitored for successful engagement. Baseline vendor attendance was 3; baseline consumer attendance was 20 with food products averaging 20% of items offered. Incentives for produce vendors and partnering with various events resulted in average number of vendors steady in late season markets between 7 and 13 on average; consumer attendance averages between 45 and 218 for the last year of the grant period per market. Vendors report mixed success with most reporting increasing sales over the first year. Food products average 71% of the market over the last four months of the market season.

## ***Accomplishments:***

Describe what was accomplished during the entire project using measurable results. Provide baseline data and actual completed project data, i.e., “before and after” measurements. Include a summary of the required metrics (before and after) (FMPP Guidelines/Announcement). Be comprehensive, descriptive and detailed in regard to each accomplishment. These may include unfavorable or unusual developments, as well. If developed with grant funds, provide website addresses and links to any materials made available via the Internet.

1. Three full-day trainings were held by the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service with more than 20 local growers attending each. Some \$1,300 in supplies and training materials were purchased.
2. Three billboards were purchased on major traffic routes for the full grant period with additional billboards secured in Pensacola for special market events. The full advertising budgeted amount was expended on billboards, radio advertising and yard signs to announce the market.
3. One vendor was awarded a stipend for completing the training and qualifying to accept SNAP. Other qualified vendors did join the market and reported increased interest from consumers in purchasing fresh produce using the SNAP system.

BASELINE DATA PER MARKET EVENT: Vendors--3; Consumers--20; Food vendors--20%

AVERAGES FOR ENDING SEASON: Vendors--8.82; Consumers--101; Food vendors--66%

## ***Beneficiaries:***

Describe and provide the actual numbers for both the direct and indirect beneficiaries of grant activities. As appropriate, include demographic composition of market vendors, customers and the surrounding market area (income level, ethnicity, age, etc.). Describe how specific groups benefitted from the grant, including any potential economic impact. Provide data supporting these conclusions. Ideally, this should include feedback from vendors and consumers, as well as any available quantitative data.

1. The market is located in a low income area. Medium household income for the general area is less than the state medium with 17.1 below the poverty level. Population is 54.5% African American, 41.7% white.

3. Low-income shoppers have better access to fresh produce now than at the start of the project. More are aware and more are participants as vendors. EXAMPLES:

3. Most of the participating market farmers reported an increase in sales (farmers reported increased sales in various ranges of \$50 to \$300 per week).

4. Local businesses were surveyed and all reported increased foot traffic on the days the market is open.

## ***Lessons Learned:***

Discuss the lessons that were learned from completing the project. Lessons learned may have influenced the direction of the project, helped improve the process, and/or optimized the results. Sharing these experiences may be quite helpful to those seeking to learn from your experiences and to achieve similar results.

- Which strategies worked (well/did not work well) during the project? Planning markets in conjunction with other events worked very well, such as festivals, parades, chamber of commerce events. Billboard ads were effective. Social media was also a valuable tool.
- What unanticipated challenges were encountered? Extreme weather made regular outdoor markets difficult. Keeping reliable personnel was also a challenge. Local consumers did not take advantage of free transportation.
- What unexpected positive results occurred? Local growers banded together to form produce cooperatives.
- “If I could do it over, I would...” have the market only two weekends a month and an indoor/sheltered venue would be ideal.
- What specific advice do you have for others taking on a similar project work? Find an indoor venue and sheltered area for the market.