

**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>	10/1/14 – 9/30/16
Authorized Representative Name:	Shawn Edgar
Authorized Representative Phone:	256-231-7731
Authorized Representative Email:	sedgar@anniston1.gov
Recipient Organization Name:	City of Anniston
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	The Downtown Farmers Market – Start Fresh in Anniston
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-FMPPX-AL-0006
Year Grant was Awarded:	2015
Project City/State:	Anniston, Alabama
Total Awarded Budget:	\$90,630

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.

i. Goal/Objective 1: To develop and establish a viable self-sustaining year-round farmers’ market in the City of Anniston to provide improved access to local and regional agricultural products and to expand new market opportunities for local and regional farmers and growers.

a. Progress Made: Significant progress has been made toward establishing the Market as an on-going program. The Market season has expanded its base of vendors and days open significantly since opening in 2014. Instead of being a summer event, the Market is open every Saturday morning from mid-April through to mid-November. The purchase of the tent with this grant is the primary driver of that longer season as it provides much needed protection from the elements especially during the height of the summer months when the heat and glare from the sun on the pavement would make the location of the Market nearly unbearable by mid-morning. With the shade and shelter from the occasional rainstorm reliably provided, the customers and vendors both are there from the opening of the Market until it ends at noon.

The number of steady, every week vendors has also grown driving a positive feedback they pull both new and repeat customers. In addition to locally grown vegetables and fruits, the market has vendors for local source cheeses, meats, honey and other bee-products, baked goods, jellies and preserves along with local handcrafts.

Advertising in various media – electronic, tv, newspaper, and via signage – has significantly increased the visibility of the Market. This visibility has drawn in more customers.

b. Impact on Community: The impact on the community has been very positive. In addition to providing a place to get locally grown or produced products, the Market has aided in the farm to table movement in other ways. In particular, Anniston now has a new restaurant that started out in Anniston at a booth at the Market.

We also were able to provide a Farm to Table Event in September, 2016, to not only showcase our farmers but also to benefit The St. Michael’s Clinic, which is a church-located free clinic to provide health care, checkups and immunizations to those who have no insurance. We partner the fresh and local vegetables, fruits, meats our farmers have to work with this poverty community located in one of the largest food deserts in the state of Alabama. The monies raised allowed this clinic to increase their services to 100 residents.

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, 20_14_). Include further explanation if necessary.
 - i. Number of direct jobs created: 2 part time
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: 2 part time
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: unknown – but includes staff from restaurant established due to popularity of that vender at the Market
 - iv. Number of markets expanded: 2 – Downtown Market and The Downtown Market at St. Michaels
 - v. Number of new markets established: 1
 - vi. Market sales increased by \$insert dollars and increased by insert percentage%.
 - a. n/a – The Market provided space to vendors who made sales directly to the public therefore sales totals are not available. Our metrics were measured via number of vendors and number of attendees.
 - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project:
 - a. In the 2014 season – prior to grant funding – there were 14 Market days averaging 18 vendors and 357 shoppers per market. There was a total of approximately 5000 shoppers for the 2014 season
 - b. In 2015, there were 26 market days with 20 vendors and 455 shoppers on average. There were over 10,000 shoppers for the 2015 season
 - c. In 2016 there were 24 markets with 22 vendors and 500 shoppers on average. There were over 15,000 shoppers for the 2016 season
 - d. Percent Increase: Vendors numbers increased 22% and Shoppers increased by 300% from 2014 to 2016.

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?
 - a. The Market manned a table at the Homeless Coalition of Northeast Alabama’s annual Project Homeless Connect to provide information about the Market to the homeless population and to aid in signing up for SNAP/EBT. The Market is located in a corridor in which there are a number of agencies that provide aid to the homeless therefore efforts have been made to get the word out that EBT cards are accepted to those that are in the area.
 - b. The Market also offers a ‘Double Bucks’ program for EBT card users where every dollar used on the card is matched by a dollar of donated money to effectively double the amount of food that can be purchased beginning on August 27, 2016. During the four weeks that the program was open \$654 were ‘doubled’. This project will be on-going in the 2017 market season for the duration of the season or as long as the funding lasts.
 - c. The Market also participated in National Night Out at Constantine Homes and Healthy Home Choices at Glen Addie homes – two of Anniston Housing Authority’s complexes. The Market also held a sign-up events for SFMNP for seniors at the Calhoun County Commission’s tag office and at senior centers and

church groups.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.
 - i. Who are your community partners?
 - a. The Market's local partners include local businesses such as Lowes, Widenet, Alabama Power and Alabama Gas Corporation, the local newspaper – The Anniston Star and a local hospital – Stringfellow Memorial Hospital amongst others. Going forward, the Market will be closely partnering with the West Anniston Foundation – a nonprofit that works to better the health and wellbeing of low/mod income citizens of Anniston.
 - ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the FMPP project?
 - a. They aided in providing additional donations of money and materials, support via advertising and in publically being partners of the Market.
 - iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMPP grant?
 - a. Our local partners have continued to support the Market's program via donations of money and materials. Also, their staffs and executives get involved in fundraising activities aimed toward supporting the operations of the Market. The addition of the participation of the West Anniston Foundation will significantly strengthen out-reach into the target communities as the nonprofit is a long established entity that is integral to providing services to low/mod income persons.

5. Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the FMPP project?
 - a. The Market does not use contractors other than occasional musical entertainment. The staff of the Market are either City of Anniston employees or volunteers.

6. Have you publicized any results yet? * Activity at the Market is communicated regularly to those who sign up for electronic media
 - i. If yes, how did you publicize the results?
 - a. Weekly Facebook posts and electronic newsletter
 - ii. To whom did you publicize the results?
 - a. To anyone who signed up to receive the information – customers, vendors, sponsors, etc
 - iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach?
 - a. The newsletter has 2900 subscribers
 - iv. Links to electronic media:
 - a. <http://www.annistonmarket.com>
 - b. <https://www.facebook.com/annistonmarket>
 - c. On Instagram as annistonmarket
 - d. Anniston Downtown Market app – search for this in smart phone app stores

*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
 - i. If so, how did you collect the information?
 - a.) Personal conversations and visits, weekly contact with shoppers and vendors.
 - b.) Responded to all telephone calls, emails, Facebook posts, comments from THE Downtown Market app
 - c.) Bimonthly meetings with the stakeholder committee, personal phone calls to sponsors
 - d.) Weekly results were conveyed to the city of Anniston, Farmers Market Authority of Alabama, Double Up Alabama, Double Up Food Bucks-Michigan
 - ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?
 - a.) Activities for young children resulted in having colors and blank “vegetables and fruits” for these children to color and take home
 - b.) Background music is nice; live entertainment is too distracting for shoppers & vendors to converse.
 - c.) Themed Saturdays were nice but not necessary
 - d.) Early shoppers (before market hours) did not want to wait until opening bell to purchase their items
 - e.) Variety of vendors is a good fit
 - f.) Need to have an ATM and a way of making change for shoppers
 - g.) Customers trusted the word of the producers as well as appreciated that the farms were inspected and that craft vendors were juried.
 - h.) Would like to see fresh flowers, live plants available
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).
 - a. An early lesson in running the Market was the need to have a source to obtain cash. As many people do not carry much if any cash on regular basis, potential sales were lost by those vendors who did not accept credit/debit payments. The solution to the problem was to provide what we called the Mobile ATM. The

City invested in a Square reader and a change fund. For a nominal fee – one just big enough to cover the Square fees – customers could get cash to make their purchases. Every Monday, a report was turned in to the Finance department showing Saturday’s activities and the change fund was replenished by Friday to be ready to go again.

- b. Another lesson learned was the necessity of planning just how to properly place the tent especially as once up it is anchored by bolts to the pavement that are not at all easily moved. As the Market opens at 7 am, the vendors are often setting up just as the sun rises. As the tent was originally oriented when set up in 2015, the glare was right in the eyes of the vendors and the earliest customers. In 2016, when putting the tent back up after being stored for the winter, it was turned 90 degrees which made all of the difference.
 - c. Utilizing modern communication techniques along with more traditional forms of advertising is the key to success. The Market has a website, a facebook page, a newsletter, and a specially designed Downtown Market smart phone app in addition to having a number of signs along roadways and advertisements in print and tv media. The smart phone app is an especially flexible tool. It allows vendors to advertise what they will have on specific market days and keeps the customer base up to date in a very immediate fashion. In a world of Twitter-driven communication, it is a tool that links vendors and customers in a close and increasingly expected type of way without having to rely on knowing and following the vendors individually via social media.
 - d. Having a reliable wireless internet for the vendors and customers during market hours made credit card/SNAP-EBT transactions so much easier. It provided an alternative for vendors to use in addition to their personal cellular plans
- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:
 - a. One major goal was to establish a year around Market. While the Market season has been significantly increased, it is not yet a 12 month program. The major hurdle still to be overcome is having a winter-appropriate structure available for the December – early March period. The tent by itself is not sufficient to ward off the cold and general damp if not steady rain of an Alabama winter. A more permanent structure with a source of heat is what is needed to entice people out on a winter morning.
 - 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:
 - a. Schools starting and ending make a huge difference in shopper attendance.
 - b. Enforced rules and regulations are necessary. Do not be afraid to say no to a vendor.

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.

- a. The Market is continuing with a 2017 market season. It will open in April and run through to October/November. Vendors are already committed and ready to go as soon as the tent goes back up. The Market is also looking to extend into having a mobile component. Having a way to carry the Market and its goods out into the communities in the food desert that exists in a goodly portion of the City would both widen availability for those unable to travel and by being there and visible encourage consumption of fresh produce in areas where it is not readily available.

- b. West Anniston Foundation has chosen THE Downtown Market to partner in targeting low income families who need help dealing with obesity. These families will be able to enjoy additional benefits from their SNAP/EBT benefits to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables while being a part of a 6 week exercise and cooking program. Because of the popularity of our Market as well as enticing these families to shop fresh, buy local, they found our market is the best way to accomplish their goals in the West Anniston communities.

- c. Our projected "mobile market" will be used to provide an opportunity for everyone who wants and needs fresh and local produce, honey, breads, cheeses to purchase these more conveniently. We hope to be able to teach safe food preparation and canning.

- 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?
 - a. Transportation to a farmers market is not always available to many citizens. While we tried locating a public transportation stop closer to our market, we did find to contact groups (senior citizens, church, clubs, mental health) to bring their clients to the market at least monthly. The Downtown Market at St. Michael will be located adjacent to the bus stop and the clinic.