

FARMERS' MARKET AND LOCAL FOOD PROMOTION PROGRAM
(FMLFPP)
Final Performance Report

Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. October 1, 2016 -September</i>	September 30, 2017 – June 18, 2019
Date Report Submitted	June 18, 2019
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-</i>	AM170100XXXXG160
Recipient Organization Name:	Semila LLC
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Viability of Local Production
Authorized Representative Name:	Decenia Vega Rodriguez
Authorized Representative Phone:	787.436.8489 / 787.348.0008
Authorized Representative Email:	semilapr@gmail.com
Year Grant was Awarded:	2017
Amount of Award:	\$46,130

FMLFPP 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: _____

1. Executive Summary—In 200 words or less, describe the project's need, purpose, goals, and quantifiable outcomes:

Puerto Rico imports about 85% of food. This makes food security vulnerable. We want to make a market research to sow different feasible products in our island. We have contacted local product buyers who tell us which products are necessary from them. As a result, we know firsthand what to sow, sales price, and the quantity production to meet the need, among others. After the research, with all this information gathered, we will make various workshops to disseminate information throughout the north and center area of Puerto Rico in order to prepare farmers and give access to the information gathered even when the project has been concluded. This project would help local farmers to harvest products that are of high local need and in turn contribute to our food security. Our goal is to share the data from the market research and crop knowledge and give access to the valuable information to as many interested farmers possible.

Farmers and interested in agriculture did not have an information base to know what products are economically viable to plant in Puerto Rico. Because of this, we proposed this project. We interviewed buyers from hotels, restaurants and supermarkets to learn which products were difficult to obtain, at what price they would be willing to buy them and how they would like them to be delivered. Thanks to this project we have this information available to everyone free of charge. We managed to realize more of the projected surveys, spread the information to all the interested free of cost and the information is available for all those who want to start farming. Which will positively impact our food security.

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2. Please provide the approved project's objectives:

Objectives		Completed	
		Yes	No*
1	Carry out a market research to gather information on the feasibility of the following highly perishable or specialty product: cacao, soursop, breadfruit, passion fruit, bell peppers, Cuban pepper, peppermint, basil and cilantrillo.	X	
2	Dissemination of the information gathered through the necessity study to all interested in developing an agricultural project on the north and central area of Puerto Rico	X	
3	Give access to the information collected to all interested in developing an agricultural project in Puerto Rico	X	

**If no is selected for any of the listed objectives, you must expand upon this in the challenges section.*

3. List your accomplishments for the project's performance period and indicate how these accomplishments assisted in the fulfillment of your project's objectives. Please include additional objectives approved by FMLFPP during the grant performance period, and highlight the impact that activities had on the project's beneficiaries.

Accomplishments	Relevance to Objective, Outcome, and/or Indicator
Twice the projected interviews were done.	Objective #1, Outcome 5a, Outcome 5b
The research was completed at the scheduled time, despite the communication challenges caused by Hurricane Maria.	Objective #1, Outcome 5a, Outcome 5b
Crops additional to those estimated in the initial plan and presented in proposal were investigated.	Objective #1, Outcome 5a, Outcome 5b
The scope of the information was greater than that projected by intervention.	Objective #2, Outcome 3h, Outcome 5c
Students from Public school have shown interest in the study. They have expressed to us that it is related to their science, environmental science and special projects classes. Several of them have started an orchard.	Objective #2, Outcome 3h, Outcome 5c

The people have reacted favorably to the information disclosed during the workshops and after having taken the workshop.	Objective #2, Outcome 3h, Outcome 5c
A copy of the study and the presentation has been given to all the participants. This initiative was driven by the request of the participants. Given that they expressed their interest in taking the study into account in the process of carrying out their personal or commercial project.	Objective #3, Outcome 3h, Outcome 5c
The study was given to collaborators and allies that were integrated once the work plan began to be executed. These will have available the study to be able to guide anyone interested in the results of the research to use it as a basis to start their agricultural projects.	Objective #3, Outcome 3h, Outcome 5c

4. Please list any challenges experienced during the project's period of performance. Provide the corrective actions taken to address these issues.

Challenges (Issues)	Corrective Actions and/or Project Changes (s)
Hurricane Maria made my office unusable. And that 90% of the employees left	<p>Before beginning the project we had resources that were vital for the success of the project but we acted by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I adapted to my reality. 2. The digital backup was very useful to resume the office operations where the employees left it. <p>I learned that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For a project like this, I must have plan B and plan C. 2. the difference between working with a team and working alone. 3. not to be afraid of change 4. to make agile decisions for the coming of the projects.
Loss of personnel	<p>Work after the normal workday</p> <p>I learned that all team members must have the basic knowledge of the functions of their colleagues so that they can carry out their tasks if they are not available in the future.</p>
Loss office and conference room	<p>I moved to another space and I made alliances to move the workshops to other facilities. All the workshops have been offered outside of my facilities where it was planned initially to be offer.</p> <p>I learned the importance of having a comprehensive contingency plan for any type of event that could stop the operations of a project.</p>

Difficulty to reach the total of the people	I learned the importance of having the many collaborators and that making alliances expands the possibilities of a project.
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5. Quantify the overall progress on the outcomes and indicators of your project. Include further explanation if necessary.

Outcome 1: To Increase Consumption of and Access to Locally and Regionally Produced Agricultural Products.

Indicator	Description	Number
1.	Total number of consumers, farm and ranch operations, or wholesale buyers reached	
1.a.	The number that gained knowledge on how to buy or sell local/regional food OR aggregate, store, produce, and/or distribute	428
1.b.	The number that reported an intention to buy or sell local/regional food OR aggregate, store, produce, and/or distribute local/regional	80
1.c.	The number that reported buying, selling, consuming more or supporting the consumption of local/regional food that they aggregate, store, produce, and/or distribute	Not applicable
2.	Total number of individuals (culinary professionals, institutional kitchens, entrepreneurs such as kitchen incubators/shared-use kitchens, etc.) reached	108
2.a.	The number that gained knowledge on how to access, produce, prepare, and/or preserve locally and regionally produced agricultural products	Not applicable
2.b.	The number that reported an intention to access, produce, prepare, and/or preserve locally and regionally produced agricultural products	80
2.c.	The number that reported supplementing their diets with locally and regionally produced agricultural products that they produced, prepared, preserved, and/or obtained	Not applicable

Outcome 2: Increase Customers and sales of local and regional agricultural products.

Indicator	Description	Number
1.	Sales increased as a result of marketing and/or promotion activities during the project performance period.	
	Original Sales Amount (in dollars)	N/A
	Resulted Sales Amount (in dollars)	N/A
	Percent Change $((n^{\text{final}} - n^{\text{initial}}) / n^{\text{initial}}) * 100 = \% \text{ change}$	N/A
2.	Customer counts increased during the project performance period.	
	Original Customer Count	N/A
	Resulted Customer Count	N/A
	Percent Change $((n^{\text{final}} - n^{\text{initial}}) / n^{\text{initial}}) * 100 = \% \text{ change}$	N/A

Outcome 3: Develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets.

Indicator	Description	Number
1.	Number of new and/or existing delivery systems/access points of those reached that expanded and/or improved offerings of	N/A

1.a	Farmers markets	
1.b.	Roadside stands	N/A
1.c.	Community supported agriculture programs	N/A
1.d.	Agritourism activities	N/A
1.e.	Other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities	N/A
1.f.	Local and regional Food Business Enterprises that process, aggregate, distribute, or store locally and regionally produced agricultural	N/A

Indicator	Description	Number
2.	Number of local and regional farmers and ranchers, processors, aggregators, and/or distributors that reported	
2.a.	An increase in revenue expressed in dollars	N/A
2.b.	A gained knowledge about new market opportunities through technical assistance and education programs	428
3.	Number of	
3.a	New rural/urban careers created (Difference between "jobs" and "careers": jobs are net gain of paid employment; new businesses created or adopted can indicate new careers)	N/A
3.b.	Jobs maintained/created	N/A
3.c.	New beginning farmers who went into local/regional food production	N/A
3.d.	Socially disadvantaged famers who went into local/regional food production	N/A
3.e.	Business plans developed	N/A

Outcome 4: Improve the food safety of locally and regionally produced agricultural products.
Only applicable to projects focused on food safety!

Indicator	Description	Number
1.	Number of individuals who learned about prevention, detection, control, and intervention food safety practices	N/A
2.	Number of those individuals who reported increasing their food safety skills and knowledge	N/A
3.	Number of growers or producers who obtained on-farm food safety certifications (such as Good Agricultural Practices or Good Handling Practices)	N/A

Outcome 5: Quantify the overall progress on this outcome indicator based on relevant project activities not covered above.
This indicator must reflect the project narrative's required additional outcome indicator.

Indicator	Description	Goal	Actual
5.a	Quantity of products studied	9	70
5.b	Number of potential buyers surveyed	50	92
5.c	Number of beneficiaries	480	428

6. Discuss your community partnerships (include applicant staff and external partners).
 - i. Who were your community partners?

Hidroponicos de Puerto Rico, Agroempresarias de Puerto Rico Asociation, Amasar, Wonderen's Food LLC, Municipio de Camuy, Department of Agriculture, University of Puerto Rico, Universidad Catolica, Public Schools, HEP, Camuianos Farmers Asociation

- ii. How did they contribute to the overall results of the FMLFPP project?
Find and coordinate places to offer the workshops and promote and connect the participants of the workshop.
- iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMLFPP grant?
As of today we have already received positive messages form the management of these allies in the dissemination of the information. They have the study and explanation of the study available to anyone who is interested. They integrate it as part of their service to the community or participants they serve in their respective initiatives.
- iv. What feedback have the partners provided (specific comments) about the results of the project?
"the study is interesting", "people have reacted very well to the study", "I did not expect so many interested people", " thanks for promoting this study", "this study will be very useful to the public", "the study is interesting", "people have reacted very well to the study", "I did not expect so many interested people", " thanks for promoting this study", "this study will be very useful to the public"

7. How do you plan to publicize the results?

- i. To whom (i.e. people, entities) do you plan to publicize the project results?
The results of the study have already been sent to the collaborators. In addition to this we will send the result to other entities that we have contacted. An announcement will be placed on our social networks informing that we have completed the project and that you can access it by requesting it from us or from our collaborators.
- ii. When do you plan to publicize the results?
Before August 2019 we will publish in our social networks how to access the study carried out.

*If you have publicized the results, please 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).

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

A friend told me he took a workshop that helped him to have a clearer idea of what to plant to start his agricultural business. Could you share more information?

- i. If so, how did you collect the information?
After finishing each workshop I met with the collaborator who helped us to summon the public and asked for their opinion on how it was
- ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?

That the information is excellent to offer in the metropolitan area and schools. Both recommendations are carried out.

9. 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: XYes
- ii. Did the project generate any income? Yes X No
 - a. If yes, \$_____generated and how was it used to further the objectives of this project?
- iii. In the table below include the total amount of **federal funds spent** during the grant performance period (**Do not** include matching or in-kind contributions):

Categories	Amount Approved in Budget	Actual Federal Expenditures (Federal
Personnel:	\$ 10,650	\$ 3,290
Fringe:		
Contractual:	\$35,000	\$ 35,000
Equipment:		
Travel:	\$ 480	\$ 280
Supplies:		
Other:		
Indirect Costs:		
TOTAL:	\$ 46,130	\$ 38,570

- iv. **ONLY for LFPP recipients:** Provide the amount of matching funds/in-kind contributions used during the grant performance period.

Categories	Match Approved in Budget	Actual Match Expenditures
Personnel:	\$ 2,700	\$ 11,865
Fringe:		
Contractual:		
Equipment:		
Travel:		\$ 880
Supplies:	\$ 2,000	\$ 121
Other:	\$ 12,148	
Indirect Costs:		
TOTAL:	\$ 16,848	\$ 12,866

10. 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 notice that in Puerto Rico there are many individuals interested in developing their agricultural projects and that their main reason for not starting is the lack of market information and crop data on how to start.

I was surprised that the population that is most open in learning about agro-business are young people between 14 to 30 years.

It was surprising to know that the communication between buyers of fresh products (hotels and restaurants) and farmers was one of the factors to improve so that there is greater production in Puerto Rico

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

The goal of reaching 480 people was not reached in its entirety. My biggest lesson was to have a more covered contingency plan. I never thought I would witness a hurricane like the one that affected Puerto Rico in September 2017. Despite this, we managed to reach 428 people directly.

- 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:

I learned that it is vital to have allies in any project. For this I recommend that you share the project with other people who seek to solve the same problem.

- iv. Discuss if and how the result of this project can be adapted to other regions, communities, and/or agricultural systems.

It is possible that Puerto Rico is not the only country with food insecurity. So replicating this project in other geographic areas or with other types of crops will help new farmers to develop their projects with less risk of initial investment.

11. Future Work:

- i. How will you continue the work of this project beyond this grant? In other words, how will you implement 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 information will be available indefinitely to all those who wish to access it through our social networks and collaborators. We no longer have information shortage to know that it is viable to plant.

- 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?

In addition to what was recommended above, I would like to motivate others to carry out similar projects focused on the socioeconomic development of local farmers. I am available to anyone who needs it.