

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 LFPP staff to avoid delays:

LFPP Phone: 202-720-2731; Email: 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.

Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	<i>September 30, 2014-September 29, 2015</i>
Authorized Representative Name:	Gail Eggeman
Authorized Representative Phone:	727-439-2017
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Recipient Organization Name:	St. Petersburg Saturday Morning Market, Inc.
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Fresh Access St Petersburg
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-LFPPX-FL-0041
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	St Petersburg Florida
Total Awarded Budget:	\$23,000

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: _____; Email: _____; Phone: _____

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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: Complete a feasibility study to determine what avenues would be most successful in our community to start a food hub to support local farmers and healthy fresh food.
 - ii. Progress Made: Final Report received from New Venture Advisors on 5/6/2014. The primary report from NVA was that we needed more Value Chain Development and that more education is needed in our community.

The committee for the hub has expanded to 7. We have weekly meetings and have contacted FAMU’s small farm program; met with the Florida Black Farmers Association; developed a relationship with a nascent farmer education program in Brooksville FL to teach farming on a 3800 acre property donated to FAMU for farmer development. We will be starting a mobile on line market intended to have a starting place for farmers to see that we will be a benefit to them and to continue the relationship through education. The committee has continued work, discussing and educating the community concerning the hub. As of 10/29/2015 the committee has expanded from five to seven to include a masters level student in Sustainability recruited at the Florida Local Food Summit, and a graphic artist/activist recruited at a showing of Fresh, the movie. We are in the process of setting up a website and purchasing online “market” software. We have been using Fresh to educate our community about why local fresh food is important. It has resulted in requests for a committee to speak at civic and community meetings. Through our regular showings of Fresh we have been given referrals to institutional and small business food services businesses and are expanding our buyer lists. We have created a list of all IFAS agents and as soon as the software is purchased we will begin farmer recruitment through IFAS, FOG, and other farm centric organizations (Food & Farm magazine, FDACS) We will provide training to farmers that need help with the online market. We are investigating the use of EBT and incentives in conjunction with the online market in the Jordan Park public housing development.
 - iii. Impact on Community: Community education and awareness of the project was initiated through surveys to both buyers and producers. NVA determined that there is interest in starting a hub in the community and that more education and value chain development needs to be done in the producer community.
 - iv. Goal/Objective 2: Visit 3 Food Hubs
 - a. We visited two Food Hubs in Florida and have a plan for a trip to Charleston to GrowFood Carolina in January. Suncoast Food Alliance (listed on USDA Food Hub site) does not have a facility but we met with John Matthews the owner of the Alliance. He serves local restaurants. East End Market in Orlando is a Food and Culture Hub. They have done a remarkable job in education and have a strong brand. Because our slow time is different from the North Carolina and South Carolina visits to these actual food hubs has been delayed until January to accommodate schedules of their executive directors. Both of these models include branding; one is a coop of farmers – all of interest in our investigation.
 - b. During a search for Food Hubs we found other food hubs to visit: the Eastern Carolina Eco Hub in Durham, NC. We hope to visit in January as was their

request. GrowFood Carolina and Eco Hub from North Carolina each have parts of food hub model that we will strive for in St. Petersburg. Eco Hub is organic only, and we believe food grown sustainably by small farmers will also serve our community. The model is good. Branding local food will distinguish West Coast Florida Fresh from industrially grown food. Our visits will include several members of our committee and we will look at financial structures, and policy, although this has been heavily discussed both by the original committee developed for the grant writing and current working committee.

- c. Grow Food Carolina is perhaps the closest to the model we wish to construct in size and branding. Through the Florida Small Farm and Alternative Enterprise conferences, the Florida Local Food Summit, searching the internet, years of operating a Market and trying to woo farmers, and studying NGFN webinars it became apparent to the committee that a Florida brand for small farmers to give our community of the difference from grocery store food and local sustainably grown food. The State of Florida has a national and international campaign called Fresh From Florida that only this year has begun marketing to Floridians to buy local. The difference is it includes all farms in Florida where quite a number are large corporate farmers. A “local” “small family farm” distinction builds awareness of quality of food and the difference similar to the Appalachian Grown branding. We have also been in contact through the Florida Organic Growers and East End Market two other developing or operating hubs to discuss future relationships for sharing of food and farmers.

Florida has three Growing Zones and food is available throughout the year in FL at different times. The Red Hills Farm Alliance is a food hub/on line Market in Tallahassee. We spent time with them at the Florida Local Food Summit and have written a grant to purchase online market software to begin attracting farmers for the Hub. We will begin by using SPSM Market vendors and two other farmers willing to start with an on-line Market. The software we have chosen to begin operations is Local Food Marketplace. The committee is identifying a pick up point as the original promised property was not available; and have customers – small shops, co-ops, small outdoor markets in need of produce as customers.

- v. Goal/Objective 3: Contact a minimum of 10 farmers/producers
 - a. 25 growers/farmers responded to the survey, 14 growers responded to the survey with only 5 completed. (pg 11 – Food Hub Market Assessment) Since completion of the study we have had three more surveys completed that included a dairy. Two more farms have agreed to join the online marketplace to begin. The surveys asked for information and demographics about the size of the farm, whether they had space to expand the current farmed area, and if they were interested. The survey also asked farmers to identify what type of farming is done. We found the farmers were reluctant to complete the survey at that point in time, but several have responded to phone calls and visits.
- vi. Goal/Objective 4: Contact a minimum of 10 restaurants, institutions, and consumer groups
 - a. 12 buyers were contacted, 6 completed surveys before the end of the study, and 4 after the study – including the University of South Florida St. Petersburg campus dining hall, Eckerd College dining hall, a mobile produce stand, a second senior living facility, Pinellas County Schools, and two “farmer’s markets” that

did not have any farmers or produce resellers at the Market. We have contacts with the Pinellas County School District and have determined that there is a possibility to work with a fewer number of targeted schools rather than the whole district. PCS is the 24th largest school district in the US. We contacted these buyers because there are distributors that work with high end restaurants but none that work with retirement centers, smaller volume shops and markets or any local universities and colleges. Sydexo is a service provider, but the USF St Petersburg vice chancellor indicated she would support a hub and hire chefs. Our consultant did not invite the recommended contact from the University but invited Sydexo to our grower buyer meeting – they indicated there was no need for a Hub. Westminster Shores, medium sized retirement facility indicated interest and immediately began conversations with their residents. Small bodegas and markets are willing to buy. Our model is not one to supply large organic stores or high end restaurants that are already being served. Our intention is to provide local food to small - medium institutions, neighborhood bodegas, a university and college, other local outdoor markets that would like to offer local/branded foods, social service agencies, a limited number of schools, and some retail that would include value added farm products that would provide jobs.

- vii. Goal/Objective 5: Assess a minimum of 3 competitors
 - a. The study indicated that there is abundant competition. The three identified by the consultant as possible competition in our area are for profit organizations not targeting small sustainable farms. The three identified by the consultant included a grower/ packing house that likely takes product from small farms but does not value small farms; and a company selling only to restaurants. The local food hub committee speaks to the development and support of small farmers in hopes of building a network of farms that is paid a fair and transparent amount from the Hub for food. Our operation is committed to offering a fair and equitable price for as much food as possible so farmers are not at the mercy of large packing houses. Sharing through a network of Florida hubs and markets will build to continually provide year round supply and variety of product, and through production planning and education build the small farm business and brand in FL.
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__). Include further explanation if necessary.
- i. Number of direct jobs created: **N/A Planning Grant**
 - ii. Number of jobs retained:
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created:
 - iv. Number of markets expanded:
 - v. Number of new markets established:
 - vi. Market sales increased by \$insert dollars and increased by insert percentage%.
 - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project:
 - a. Percent Increase:

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? N/A
4. Discuss your community partnerships.
 - i. Who are your community partners? New partners include a strong working group in our target community – Deuces Live, Next Step II, Next Stop Produce, two interns from a local college and In Season Pro, a Masters level student, a graphic artist – all people and organizations volunteering with value chain development and implementation
 - ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project? These organizations, all joining the working group later in the process, are working together to develop a business plan, identify further partners/grower buyers and meeting with critical funding partners such as Foundation for a Healthy St. Petersburg and Allegany Franciscan Foundation, and the community through a mini speakers bureau--.
 - iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project’s future activities, beyond the performance period of this LFPP grant? The partners are committed to developing a food hub in our community to support farmers and ultimately bring fresh food to our community. The more we talk, the more people willing to work.
5. Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project? New Venture Advisors was hired to complete the Feasibility Study their report is attached. We recommend hiring more local consultants with more mature staff.
6. Have you publicized any results yet? No, further planning and funds development is required. We have submitted a grant to a local foundation and have gotten great feedback from them during the planning process. This initial grant includes web development that will give us communication and education access through an email address - WestCoastFloridaFresh the working name for the hub, training for both customers and producers to use the software, and supplies and bags, printing for the start-up of the on-line Market. Through the website and business sized cards we can collect names and level of interest to get an indication of both demand and supply for the hub while we establish the online Market. The online market is the first phase of the Hub. We have visited the city of St Pete to discuss the possibility of hub and request a piece of property, we show Fresh and then discuss with the audience what a hub could mean to our food supply, we are in process of being accepted as part of the city’s Sustainability Council as a Food Policy committee in St. Petersburg. We have visited with and been given great feedback from a new foundation in St Petersburg called Foundation for a Healthy St Petersburg. We meet each week to discuss progress made, contacts, where we should go next, properties for a temporary hub, use of EBT through an on-line market under the St Pete Saturday Morning Market, the possibility for incentives to be offered in low income neighborhoods. Our continued work and weekly meetings have begun the awareness campaign.-
 - i. If yes, how did you publicize the results?
 - ii. To whom did you publicize the results?
 - iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach?

*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? On a one to one basis the working group has met with the city, other food businesses,

businesses with small cafeterias, the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay, Bon Secours Foundation, Foundation for a Healthy St Petersburg, and reported back our progress to the interested non-profits that provided letters of support in our grant application.

- i. If so, how did you collect the information? We met with our community leaders to educate and discuss the future of food access in St Petersburg. For the seven committee members the conversation of Food Hub goes with us everywhere.
- ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)? The community through the Sustainability Council is establishing a food policy committee by two or our working group to support food in our city but to also educate and build awareness about WestCoastFloridaFresh as a mechanism to ensure good food is available for all people and into the future. Small farm food is the foundation of health in our community. As we increase demand – the interested farmers and growers will join us and in a year we can do the first season of production planning and brand building.

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? 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).

The report from New Venture Advisors (NVA) indicated Fresh Access St Petersburg would require further value chain development. During the conduct of the research NVA contacted buyers and growers on our behalf. We consider that their efforts were not as compelling as what our current committee is doing. Until we actually begin operations and it is visible to our IFAS agents and farmers we are not able to start the hub. We have identified 12 buyers giving us more demand than supply at this point. The on-line market is our first phase to build visibility to producers. As we build further credibility and identify and build a hub, make transportation choices, and develop a central non-profit to operate the developing hub - nonstop networking and value chain development is critical. Building the committee and local supporters has kept us moving forward.
- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving: The stated goals of the feasibility study were met, the feasibility study was completed. The outcomes of the study and the USDA grant have given the working committee further standing – having received a federal grant for the purpose of starting a food hub has given us credibility and allowed us to work as a committee, to continue to purpose of our goal.
- 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: Don't give up, keep your

mission, be careful who is involved that the vision is aligned. Hire accounting/administration staff as soon as possible.

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. Next steps are continuing interviews, and research with the aid of National Good Food Network and local advocates. We have begun work on our Business Plan with the addition of a masters level student for phase II, the physical hub. The Business Plan will include a transportation plan, a marketing and education plan, identify staffing and operational needs. The online market will give us visibility and requires less than \$10,000 to startup, and so is a small project to demonstrate to our community of buyers and especially to growers the benefits of the food hub. Local funding will be sought for the food hub and one member of the committee is an expert in federal funding.

- 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? We are moving forward with value chain development, a small portable demonstration food hub and hiring a developer to seek further farmers and buyers. We will visit the NC and SC hubs in January to learn from these two hubs gaining hands on experience.