

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

<b>Report Date Range:</b> <i>(e.g. October 1, 2016 -September 30, 2017)</i>	September 30, 2017 – March 31, 2019
<b>Date Report Submitted</b>	
<b>Grant Agreement Number:</b> <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	AM170100XXXXG089
<b>Recipient Organization Name:</b>	Sustainable Food Center
<b>Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:</b>	Planning for a Central Texas Food Hub: Feasibility Study
<b>Authorized Representative Name:</b>	Ronda Rutledge
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<b>Year Grant was Awarded:</b>	2017
<b>Amount of Award:</b>	\$100,000

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).

X Different individual: Name: Adrienne Haschke; Email: Adrienne@sustainablefoodcenter.org; Phone: 512-220-1135

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

The USDA-funded [Planning for a Central Texas Food Hub: Feasibility Study](#) sought to determine the viability of launching a brick and mortar food hub serving the Greater Austin area by studying the opportunities and barriers Central Texas farmers face to scale up production to meet demand for larger-volume intermediated markets. Led by Sustainable Food Center (SFC), the core project team included the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT), Texas Center for Local Food (TCLF), Farmshare Austin, and City of Austin Office of Sustainability, with key contributions from other projects consultants. The team employed a three-pronged study design made up of a supply analysis, a demand analysis, and a landscape analysis to understand food hub feasibility.

The project team concluded that, in Central Texas, multiple assets need to be built and/or strengthened in order to bring more local, sustainably grown fresh produce into the marketplace. Physical aggregation is necessary for small to mid-sized producers to be able to enter into larger-volume markets. However, existing intermediaries with the infrastructural capacity and mission-driven commitment to aggregate and distribute local, sustainably grown food could contribute to this goal without having to build a new “brick and mortar” facility. The project team ultimately prescribed a set of recommended actions to strengthen existing aggregation and distribution of local, sustainably grown produce. These actions represent a coordinated and collective strategy towards creating a robust, sophisticated and resilient regional food system.

2. Please provide the approved project's objectives:

Objectives		Completed	
		Yes	No*
1	Organize and convene a cohort of Central Texas farmers to lead/assist in planning for a Central Texas Food Hub, in partnership with the project's key collaborators.	Yes	
2	Determine viability for implementation of a newly established or expanded Central Texas food hub serving the Austin MSA through a comprehensive feasibility study that builds on prior research conducted by NCAT and examines local supply, demand, and existing assets.	Yes	
3	Create a business plan that outlines: cost of implementation, revenue goals/cash flow, management structure, strategies for economic/funding sustainability, etc.		No
4	Determine which agency/organization will own or execute the long-term business plan and food hub operations.		No
5	Develop a plan for implementation, in consideration of variables revealed in feasibility and business planning processes.	Yes	

*\*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
<p><b>Farmer Advisory Team, 7 produce farmers participated.</b> In December 2017, the project team convened a diverse cohort of farmers in Central Texas to participate as producer advisors. The farmers are all produce growers and ranged from generational farms to beginning farms, small farms to medium-sized farms, conventional to sustainable to organic, and represented gender, age and racial diversity.</p> <p>Farmer advisors reviewed the Producer Survey prior to release and helped write and edit questions. They then shared the Producer Survey with their network of fellow farmers, as well as helped promote and recruit farmers to attend the farmer focus groups.</p>	<p>Relevant to Objective 1  Relevant to Outcome 1, Indicator 1  Relevant to Outcome 1, Indicator 1.a.</p>
<p><b>Producer Survey, 63 producers responded.</b> In January 2018 the project team released a survey of produce growers that was open through March 2018. The survey received 63 responses from small to mid-sized fruit and vegetable growers in and around Central Texas. This survey was a critical component of the Supply Analysis section of the Feasibility Study. It helped us understand producer characteristics (e.g. farm acreage and production acreage, location, years farming, annual gross</p>	<p>Relevant to Objective 2  Relevant to Outcome 1, Indicator 1</p>

revenue), as well as existing sales channels, what if any food safety and sustainability certifications farmers held and interest in wholesale.	
<p><b>Producer focus groups, 28 total producers attended.</b> Held 4 producer focus groups in February - April 2018. The focus groups provided qualitative data and insight into the obstacles producers face in maintaining a viable farm business and expanding for wholesale markets. These sessions illuminated key gaps in the system that need to be addressed. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Price points for premium produce are more than markets are willing and/or able to pay.</li> <li>• Lack of time/expertise to devote to marketing their products.</li> <li>• Uncertainty around food safety regulations.</li> </ul>	<p>Relevant to Objective 2  Relevant to Outcome 1, Indicator 1  Relevant to Outcome 1, Indicator 1.a.</p>
<p><b>Informational and Outreach Session, 37 producers attended.</b> On February 3, 2018, project team members held an Informational and Outreach session at the 2018 Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (TOFGA) Annual Conference. Goals of the session were to 1) inform folks about what is a food hub, 2) notify them that this project is underway and 3) determine questions to ask in the focus groups.</p>	<p>Relevant to Objective 2  Relevant to Outcome 1, Indicator 1  Relevant to Outcome 1, Indicator 1.a.</p>
<p><b>Producer scholarships to the 2018 TOFGA Annual Conference, 13 producers awarded and attended.</b> The project team announced scholarship funding for 13 producers to attend the 2018 TOFGA conference. All recipients were required to attend the Informational and Outreach Session on February 3<sup>rd</sup>.</p>	<p>Relevant to Objective 2  Relevant to Outcome 1, Indicator 1  Relevant to Outcome 1, Indicator 1.a.  Relevant to Outcome 3, Indicator 2.b.</p>
<p><b>National Good Food Network Conference, 2018.</b> 4 study partners attended the NGFN Food Hub conference in Albuquerque, NM in March 2018. All team members canvassed the conference and attended different pre-conference sessions, field trips and conference sessions.</p>	<p>Relevant to Objective 2  Relevant to Objective 5  Relevant to Outcome 3, Indicator 1.f.</p>
<p><b>LFPP Buyer Survey, 24 buyers responded.</b> The results of this 28-question survey informed a large portion of the Demand Analysis section of the Feasibility Study. Respondents answered questions related to operational characteristics, local procurement practices and interest, and purchasing requirements.</p>	<p>Relevant to Objective 2  Relevant to Outcome 1, Indicator 1</p>
<p><b>Grocery Retail Survey, 3 buyers responded.</b> Similar to the Buyer Survey, the results of this 15-question survey informed the Demand Analysis section of the Feasibility Study. Respondents answered questions related to operational characteristics, local procurement practices and interest, and purchasing requirements.</p>	<p>Relevant to Objective 2  Relevant to Outcome 1, Indicator 1</p>
<p><b>Buyer Interviews, 9 buyers interviewed.</b> These interviews were conducted via phone and allowed buyers to provide more detail about their specific motivations and operational characteristics. It also assessed barriers and opportunities for local food procurement. The results of this qualitative survey informed the Demand Analysis section of the Feasibility Study.</p>	<p>Relevant to Objective 2  Relevant to Outcome 1, Indicator 1  Relevant to Outcome 1, Indicator 1.a.</p>
<p><b>Intermediary Business Interviews, 11 businesses interviewed.</b> This informed the Landscape Analysis section of the Feasibility Study. By phone and in-person, we interviewed 11 of the closely aligned distributors who were adjacent to the local food hub space</p>	<p>Relevant to Objective 2  Relevant to Objective 3  Relevant to Objective 5  Relevant to Outcome 3, Indicator 1.f.</p>

and could easily move into it. The interviews asked about their commitment to purchasing from local growers, inquired about internal Strengths and Weaknesses to sourcing and selling local produce, and requested suggestions for supportive and/or complimentary services organizations can provide to get more local food into larger volume markets.	
<b>Feasibility Study.</b> Compiled all primary and secondary research on Central Texas supply, demand and competitive landscape. The final, designed document “ <i>Feasibility Study for a Central Texas Food Hub</i> ” was completed on February 8, 2019!	Relevant to Objective 2 Relevant to Objective 3 Relevant to Objective 5 Relevant to Outcome 3, Indicator 1.f. Relevant to Outcome 6, Indicator 6.a.
<b>Food Finance Institute Bootcamp in October 2018.</b> Tera Johnson provided a 2-day workshop and consultation for the entire LFPP team. We studied unique value propositions, Lean Business Model Canvas, sources of capital, etc. and used Tera’s templates as the framework for our Implementation Plan. The “Implementation Plans for Central Texas Value Chain” illustrates the Lean Business Model Canvas, Sources and Uses of Capital and Project Timeline for 3 of the 5 priority actions recommended in the Feasibility Study.	Relevant to Objective 4 Relevant to Objective 5 Relevant to Outcome 3, Indicator 1.f.
<b>Presentations to local and regional economic development agencies, community and business leaders, and elected officials, 3 presentations.</b> Members of the LFPP Team have made the following presentations: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. TOFGA Annual Conference, Saturday February 16, 2019. Corpus Christi, TX.</li> <li>2. Elgin City Council presentation, Tuesday March 5, 2019. Elgin, TX.</li> <li>3. Austin EcoNetwork Interview, Wednesday March 6, 2019. Facebook Live.</li> <li>4. MAFO Conference, Monday May 6, 2019. San Antonio, TX. <i>(of note: outside of grant timeframe, but relevant to grant activities).</i></li> <li>5. Capital Area Council of Governments, Capital Area Economic Development District Board meeting, Friday May 15, 2019. Austin, TX. <i>(of note: outside of grant timeframe, but relevant to grant activities).</i></li> </ol>	Relevant to Outcome 6, Indicator 6.b.
<b>Implementation Plan.</b> Three of the top 5 priority recommendations from the Feasibility Study were advanced into the Implementation Planning phase, and which are enumerated in the final document “ <i>Implementation Plans for Central Texas Value Chain.</i> ”	Relevant to Objective 5 Relevant to Outcome 6, Indicator 6.a.

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)
<b>Landscape Changes</b> Two months after we were awarded the LFPP	After many conversations with Common Market over the course of this entire study, we decided that

<p>grant, Common Market became officially incorporated in Texas. Although based in Houston, their highly successful and replicated model allowed for immediate engagement with growers in Central Texas and immediate account development in Austin.</p>	<p>a new brick and mortar local food aggregation and distribution facility would be redundant and likely put us into competition with a sophisticated, successful food hub. We therefore decided not to write a Business Plan for a brick and mortar food hub.</p> <p>Instead, our Feasibility Study identified a set of recommendations to advance the outcomes relevant to our project goals: advancing local food into larger volume markets. A few of these recommendations are related to new/expanded businesses that help process, aggregate, distribute or store locally and regionally produced agricultural products.</p>
<p><b>Complexity of the Subject Matter</b> The dynamic nature of food supply chain economics, combined with the wide range of expertise represented in our project team made it a challenge to stay focused on the aggregation and distribution component of this study. We were perpetually discovering new sets of challenges to local food production and sales, making it difficult at times for the project team to reconcile priorities that would move our goal forward (getting more local food into larger volume markets.)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The National Good Food Network Conference clearly, and in no uncertain terms, defined critical components of successful food hubs. The Conference also allowed for networking and sharing amongst our team members and fellow LFPP awardees (past and present) who had successfully penned feasibility studies.</li> <li>2. A Facilitator was recruited onto our team in May 2018, and attended all subsequent team meetings. She skillfully and successfully ensured everyone felt heard and led us to consensus decisions. Many team members remarked that this is what got us all lined up in the same direction.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Feasibility Study Design</b> It quickly became apparent that a study of this magnitude and volume needed to be professionally designed. The project team decided to design and print the Feasibility Study for distribution at conferences and stakeholder presentations. This would help display the information in a way that was visually appealing and also highlight the main points of a 63 page document. We did not, however, budget time or money towards Graphic Design services.</p>	<p>One of the project partners was able to access a week of their staff Graphic Designer’s time. This helped us layout the content, after which we had to go through a month of laborious work to finalize the content and design. Lesson learned that anytime a major project deliverable is a large report, build Graphic Design services into the budget and project timeline.</p>

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	155

1.a.	The number that gained knowledge on how to buy or sell local/regional food OR aggregate, store, produce, and/or distribute local/regional food	73
1.b.	The number that reported an intention to buy or sell local/regional food OR aggregate, store, produce, and/or distribute local/regional food	NA
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	NA
2.	<b>Total number of individuals (culinary professionals, institutional kitchens, entrepreneurs such as kitchen incubators/shared-use kitchens, etc.) reached</b>	
2.a.	The number that gained knowledge on how to access, produce, prepare, and/or preserve locally and regionally produced agricultural products	NA
2.b.	The number that reported an intention to access, produce, prepare, and/or preserve locally and regionally produced agricultural products	NA
2.c.	The number that reported supplementing their diets with locally and regionally produced agricultural products that they produced, prepared, preserved, and/or obtained	NA

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

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

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

Indicator	Description	Number
1.	<b>Number of new and/or existing delivery systems/access points of those reached that expanded and/or improved offerings of</b>	
1.a.	Farmers markets	NA
1.b.	Roadside stands	NA
1.c.	Community supported agriculture programs	NA
1.d.	Agritourism activities	NA
1.e.	Other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities	NA
1.f.	Local and regional Food Business Enterprises that process, aggregate, distribute, or store locally and regionally produced agricultural products	2
2.	<b>Number of local and regional farmers and ranchers, processors, aggregators, and/or distributors that reported</b>	
2.a.	An increase in revenue expressed in dollars	NA
2.b.	A gained knowledge about new market opportunities through technical assistance and education programs	13
3.	<b>Number of careers, jobs, farmers that went into production</b>	

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)	NA
3.b.	Jobs maintained/created	NA
3.c.	New beginning farmers who went into local/regional food production	NA
3.d.	Socially disadvantaged famers who went into local/regional food production	NA
3.e.	Business plans developed	0

**Outcome 4: Improve the food safety of locally and regionally produced agricultural products.**

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

**Outcome 5: To establish or expand a local and regional food business enterprise.**

Indicator	Description	Number
5.a.	Number of unmet consumer needs, barriers to local foods, unserved populations, etc. identified through the use of a comprehensive needs assessment when developing a plan to establish or expand a local and regional food business enterprise.	3
5.b.	Number of plans for establishing or expanding a local and regional food business enterprise developed based on a comprehensive needs assessment.	1
5.c.	Amount of non-Federal financial, professional, and technical assistance measured in dollars secured as a result of the developed plan(s) to establish or expand a local and regional food business enterprise.	\$0

**Outcome 6: To produce research that drives economic development of local and regional food enterprises that expand market opportunities for farms and ranches serving local markets and increases domestic consumption of local foods.**

Indicator	Description	Number
6.a.	Number of documents produced related to the collection and analysis of data that could potentially inform production or business practices supporting local and regional food enterprises.	3
6.b.	Number of presentations to local and regional economic development agencies, community and business leaders, and elected officials	5

6. Discuss your community partnerships (include applicant staff and external partners).

The following community partners/agencies formally contributed to the development of the Feasibility Study: National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT), Farmshare Austin, Texas Center for Local Food (TCLF), Foodshed Investors (formerly DBA "Austin Foodshed Investors"), A&M AgriLife Extension, Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance (FARFA), the City of Austin Office of Sustainability, Capital Area Council of Governments, and Tera Johnson consultant via The Wallace Center. These partners helped lead in the collection and evaluation of data relevant to the Feasibility Study's supply,

demand, and landscape analyses, as well as the resulting recommended action plans for implementation. Each partner weighed in on the decision to determine ultimate feasibility of a brick and mortar food hub, and the extent to or priority in which recommended actions should take place. With specific recommended actions in place, there's now an understanding among the project team about which partner will hold primary responsibility for future projects that advance the local food supply chain going forward.

7. How do you plan to publicize the results?

The Feasibility Study is posted on Sustainable Food Center's website for digital access. This summary has also been shared by members of the project team to relevant stakeholders such as private funders, partner associations and affiliated organizations, among others. Members of the project team have presented the research, findings and recommendations to multiple groups across multiple platforms:

- February 16, 2019. Conference presentation titled "Central Texas Food Hub Feasibility" at the annual Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association conference in Corpus Christi, TX.
- March 5, 2019. Agenda item at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Elgin City Council.
- March 6, 2019. Facebook Live interview hosted by Austin EcoNetwork.
- May 6, 2019. Conference presentation at the MAFO Conference in San Antonio, TX.
- May 17, 2019. Agenda item at the quarterly meeting of the Capital Area Economic Development District, a committee of the Capital Area Council of Governments.
- *In process of scheduling* Agenda item at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Bastrop County Commissioners' Court.

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

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

The Feasibility Study has been widely shared via the partners that collaborated on the study via social media channels, newsletters, formal presentations and informal presentations. In fact, it has laid the ground work for next steps in terms of addressing the recommendations that came out of the study. The study has been shared with the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF), current funders of Common Market Texas and Sustainable Food Center. The study's findings have helped MSDF understand the landscape of food hubs and the opportunities for improving the supply chain between Texas farmers and institutional buyers.

ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?

Though not formally documented, the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and people have a genuine interest in the findings and learning how the study can form the basis of next steps in addressing the findings. Regional producers have been particularly supportive and are keenly interested in forming partnerships to move forward with some of the recommendations, in particular establishing micro-aggregation nodes, facilitating land access and matchmaking between producers and market accounts.

Specific feedback at presentations has also been robust. Attendees at the annual TOFGA conference followed-up with project members after the presentation to discuss a variety of interests in this topic, including, but not limited to:

- Requesting more information on how to design a similar study for their South Texas region;
- Seeking collaborative opportunities to make a few of the recommendations actionable; and
- Sharing similar initiatives and aligned businesses at a larger National level.

In addition, when presenting to the Capital Area Council of Governments on May 17<sup>th</sup>, Austin City Council Member Jimmy Flannigan expressed gratitude for this endeavor and requested more information. SFC staff followed up with Council Member Flannigan, sharing the full study with his staffers and discussing the additional work SFC and partners are doing in light of the recommendations.

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:  Yes
- ii. Did the project generate any income?  Yes  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 Funds ONLY)
Personnel:	\$12,990.00	\$12,427.49
Fringe:	\$2,598.00	\$2390.38
Contractual:	\$72,036.00	\$71,822.68
Equipment:	\$0	\$0
Travel:	\$867.00	\$867.49
Supplies:	\$0	\$0
Other:	\$3,600.00	\$3,900.00
Indirect Costs:	\$7,909.00	\$8,591.96
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$100,000.00</b>	<b>\$100,000.00</b>

- 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:	\$24,883.00	\$24,883.00
Fringe:	\$4,977.00	\$4,977.00
Contractual:	\$28,231.00	\$2,9110.10
Equipment:	\$0	\$0
Travel:	\$0	\$0
Supplies:	\$0	\$0
Other:	\$0	\$0
Indirect Costs:	\$5,809.00	\$5,809.02
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$63,900.00</b>	<b>\$64,779.12</b>

10. Lessons Learned:

The project team learned the following valuable lessons through the implementation of this project:

- 1) In developing implementation strategies of our recommended actions (i.e. not a brick and mortar food hub) we gained a lot of knowledge about various ways food hubs can operate/be structured. This was especially evident as we gained more financial literacy via conferences and trainings. The most salient lessons learned in that regard were to a) start small, b) maintain the ability to pivot (“hubs be nimble, hubs be quick”), c) diversify revenue streams, d) hire the right

management staff and lastly, d) cultivate meaningful relationships with growers and with buyers. One member attended Tera Johnson's pre-National Food Hub Conference session "Fearless Fundraising" and recruited her to come to Austin to provide a financial bootcamp to the entire project team.

2) The complexity of food hub assessment combined with the broad range of expertise represented on the project team made it challenging, at times, to keep laser focused on the project outcomes. Having a facilitator to keep project team meetings on time and on topic really helped keep our efforts focused on the project goals, while also allowing everyone to have a voice and decision-making power.

3) Anytime a project deliverable is a report, white paper, study, etc – it is necessary to budget time and money for graphic design services as well as professional printing and binding. Design elements are almost as vital as the content itself. Having a well-designed report will ensure that the report gets read and is a valuable asset to the community. It also allows you to bring viable, hard copies to presentations and conferences in order to share with others and present a polished image to your peers.

We feel this type of feasibility study work could easily be adapted to other communities/regions, given the right mix of partners, funding, and focus. The size and scale of Texas can make defining a project scope or region difficult – there are a number of ways one can define "Central Texas." However, it's unlikely that this problem would apply to most other states. We hope the lessons learned in this report can be used to inform other similar projects happening elsewhere in the country.

#### 11. Future Work:

Many of the recommended actions outlined in the Feasibility Study are already being actioned by several of the project team members, including the "Market Matchmaking" idea and the creation of the Elgin Local Food Center. Members of this project team are keeping in close communication and collaboration to ensure the work is not being duplicated, and also to ensure clear division in roles as we work to synergistically complete different aspects of the Feasibility Study's recommended actions. SFC submitted a market matchmaking project to the Texas Department of Agriculture, which, if funded, would contribute to the following intended outcomes/goals: 1) build capacity for local food procurement among a cohort of at least four institutional buyers to expand or improve purchasing of Texas-grown and sustainably-grown fruits and vegetables, 2) increase wholesale readiness among a cohort of ten Texas producers, 3) increase revenue of the producers growers cohort by 25%, and 4) ensure coordination/planning between growers and buyers. Many of the same project partners as the LFPP-funded Feasibility Study are included in this proposed project: Foodshed Investors (FI), Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, and the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT). FI will provide financial assistance and training for producers; AgriLife will conduct the evaluation of the project. The activities will include: a) connecting buyers to growers to facilitate transactions, b) providing growers with wholesale readiness and financial consultations, c) coordinating crop planning/product availability with advance purchasing commitments, and d) potentially connecting producers to contracted distributor vendors that can aggregate, store and deliver large volumes of produce. Additionally, Texas Center for Local Food is actively looking to fund the Elgin Local Food Center, which was one of the study recommendations. Farmshare Austin is addressing the recommendation of facilitating land access to producers by launching Land Link Texas. The City of Austin is examining the potential of a food cluster, which was also one of the recommendations. In summary, the Food Hub Feasibility Study provided a launching pad of recommendations for various entities in the Central Texas region to address and collaborate on to achieve success .