

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

The final performance report summarizes the outcome and activities of your FMLFPP award objectives. Failure to submit acceptable closeout reports for an existing grant within 90 calendar days following the grant end date may result in exclusion from future AMS grant opportunities.

This final report will be made available to the public once it is approved by FMLFPP 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 **due within 90 days of the project's performance period end date** (as noted in box 15 of your grant agreement (AMS-33), or sooner if the project is complete. The report must be typed single-spaced in 11-point font, not to exceed fifteen (15) 8.5 x 11 pages (excluding existing Final Performance Report form content). For example, if the Final Performance Report form is six (6) pages before you begin entering your project information into the form, your report may be up to 21 pages (6 pages + 15 pages).

Provide answers to **each question** and all applicable outcome and indicators as it applies to your project. If you are unable to provide a response explain why. It is preferred that you email your completed performance report to your assigned FMLFPP Grants Management Specialist to avoid delays. In case of any extraordinary reason a faxed report can be accepted; please notify your assigned Grants Management Specialist to inform about your submission.

Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. October 1, 2016 -September 30, 2017)</i>	September 30, 2017 – March 31, 2019
Date Report Submitted	June 27, 2019
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPFX-XX-XXXX)</i>	AM170100XXXXG155
Recipient Organization Name:	Handicap Village / Opportunity Village
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Pilot to Investigate Multi-Farm CSA in North Iowa
Authorized Representative Name:	Michael Mahaffey
Authorized Representative Phone:	641-355-1231
Authorized Representative Email:	mmahaffey@onevision.org
Year Grant was Awarded:	2017
Amount of Award:	\$91,428.00

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: Andrea Evelsizer; Email: northiowafreshandrea@gmail.com; Phone: 319-325-4222

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

Opportunity Village proposes to test a multi-farm Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) food box program as a strategy to increase access to, and consumption of, locally-grown food in North Iowa. The pilot will include planning out the CSA logistics with support from a pair of experienced CSA farmers, marketing the program to worksites, and testing a 50 CSA share pilot for a 23 week season during 2018. This 50 full share equivalent (FSE) pilot may involve up to 75 individuals purchasing full or partial shares. We plan to collaborate with worksite partners both in marketing and setting up delivery sites. We will evaluate the project's sustainability with input from the producers, aggregator, consumers, and business partners.

The Opportunity Good Food Box CSA model addresses several issues in our region, including spreading the risk of crop failure across several producers (a concern for single producer CSAs); support for the sustainability of the local food hub; the ability to expand the reach of local food into communities whose current access to local food access is limited; increased job opportunities for individuals with disabilities served by non-profit Opportunity Village; and the continuation of Opportunity Village's leadership in North Iowa's local food movement.

1. Please provide the approved project’s objectives:

Objectives		Completed	
		Yes	No*
1	PLAN a multi-farm North Iowa Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)	X	
2	TRAIN producers and aggregation crews at the Opportunity Village (OV) in the process of supplying and preparing CSA boxes for delivery to subscribers	X	
3	OPERATE a CSA distribution plan for 50 FSE (full season equivalent) shares during May through October 2018 in North Iowa	X	
4	ANALYZE the performance of this pilot project and its impact on North Iowa producers and the Opportunity Village if expanded.	X	
5			
6			
7			

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

2. 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
Developed production plan and information management system for 22 week CSA	Important to ensure adequate quantity and diversity of vegetables will be available and a system to manage the orders and deliveries (Obj. 1.1)
Developed SOP’s for CSA (food safety practices and aggregation plan)	Important for training producers and aggregation staff (Obj. 1.1, Obj. 1.4)

Created marketing plan for outreach to worksites	Important for planning sales and outreach strategy (Obj. 1.2)
Created CSA brochure for marketing	As above (Obj. 1.2)
Created 1 minute CSA promo video	As above (Obj. 1.2 , Obj. 1.3)
Created plan for weekly educational newsletter	As above (Obj. 1.3, Obj. 3.2)
Researched and conducted 1 time meat distribution as an optional add-on the CSA subscribers.	To expand the number of producers who are impacted by this project (Obj. 1.6)
Hosted producer planning and training meetings	Important for ensuring quality and quantity of produce (Obj. 2.1)
Trained aggregation crew	To ensure quality, consistency, food safety and customer service (Obj. 2.2)
Operate 22 week CSA delivery including weekly newsletter	To test whether there is sufficient market for direct to consumer deliveries of produce and offer (One Vison) Opportunity Village clients employment opportunities (Obj. 1.5, Obj. 3.1, Obj. 3.2, Obj. 3.3 and Obj. 3.4)
51 individual customers participated in CSA (28 Full Season Equivalent)	Obj. 3.1, Obj. 3.3 and Obj. 3.4
11 worksites participated with at least 1 employee purchasing the CSA	Obj. 3.1, Obj. 3.3 and Obj. 3.4
Dropped weekly boxes at 7 sites (some worksites were combined)	Obj. 3.1, Obj. 3.3 and Obj. 3.4
Conducted 4 cooking demos at worksites and public sites	Obj. 3.2
Hosted an Open House/Field Day at OV	Obj. 3.2
Completed second promotional video which is designed to generate awareness of the program and the partnership between the farmers and OV.	Obj. 3.2
Conducted early season survey of first 6 weeks	To evaluate customer satisfaction and potential changes for next season (Obj. 4.1 & 4.2)
Conducted post season survey of subscribers and site hosts	As above (Obj. 4.1 & 4.2)
Analyze surveys	To determine what worked, what didn't and what can be done better (Obj. 4.3)
Create recommendations for future multi-farm CSA programs (which are included in this report)	Important for planning and improving 2019 season and future years as well as sharing our program and experiences with others (Obj. 4.4)

3. 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)
Marketing materials (brochure and video) took longer to prepare than expected causing us to get behind on our planned outreach/sales schedule.	Worked with Healthy Mason City Director and Cerro Gordo Department of Public Health to identify worksites with well-established wellness programs to expediate the sales process.
CSA program is a relatively unfamiliar concept in our area so considerable education of work-site managers was required before they were ready to share the program with their employees.	Working with sites with established wellness programs helped but also just regular follow up with site contacts.
Fewer individuals, per site, purchased the CSA than was expected.	We approached more sites than was originally planned. Planned for 4 -5 sites with 10-15 employees at each to reach goal of 50 FSE but ended up with 7 drop sites and 28 FSE.
Maintaining contact with the increased number of sites was time consuming.	Broker had to keep good records of dates of contacts and follow up that was needed.
Producer production planning was not very accurate due to unforeseen growing challenges (weather, excessive rain, lost crops).	Broker was sourcing product more on a weekly basis based on what was available and was not able to rely as heavily on the production plan.
Some produce quality issues resulted due to new producers who were not familiar with wholesale quality grading and standards.	Produce Quality Concern records were completed and sent to the producers to educate them on proper harvesting and post-harvest handling.
Some aggregation and delivery staff errors	Incident Reports were completed in order to summarize the issue and clarify the expectations and prevent future issues.
Due to the successful placement of many of the more skilled clients, there were fewer OV clients who were qualified and available to work at aggregation site.	Hired 1 regular employee and 2 temporary employees plus OV's onsite aggregation coordinator (match), but also pulled in other OV staff to help as needed.
We had difficulty finding time to conduct cooking demos at worksites. Worksites were not very willing to schedule the events.	We ended up hosting one demo at a worksite but also conducted 3 additional demos at public locations but invited the CSA subscribers to attend those public events.

4. 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	68
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 (*extrapolated based on 22 individuals who completed the survey)	62*
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	68*
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	62*
2.	Total number of individuals (culinary professionals, institutional kitchens, entrepreneurs such as kitchen incubators/shared-use kitchens, etc.) reached (based on verbal discussion with cooks)	2
2.a.	The number that gained knowledge on how to access, produce, prepare, and/or preserve locally and regionally produced agricultural products	2
2.b.	The number that reported an intention to access, produce, prepare, and/or preserve locally and regionally produced agricultural products	2
2.c.	The number that reported supplementing their diets with locally and regionally produced agricultural products that they produced, prepared, preserved, and/or obtained	2

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)	\$0.00
	Resulted Sales Amount (in dollars)	\$25,335.01
	Percent Change $((n^{\text{final}} - n^{\text{initial}}) / n^{\text{initial}}) * 100 = \% \text{ change}$	100%
2.	Customer counts increased during the project performance period.	
	Original Customer Count	0
	Resulted Customer Count	51
	Percent Change $((n^{\text{final}} - n^{\text{initial}}) / n^{\text{initial}}) * 100 = \% \text{ change}$	100%

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	
1.a.	Farmers markets	n/a
1.b.	Roadside stands	n/a
1.c.	Community supported agriculture programs	1
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 products	1
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 (# of producers +NIF)	10
2.b.	A gained knowledge about new market opportunities through technical assistance and education programs (# of producers +NIF)	12
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 (producers, aggregation staff and NIF consultants)	18
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.

Outcome 5: 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.	n/a
5.b.	Number of plans for establishing or expanding a local and regional food business enterprise developed based on a comprehensive needs assessment.	n/a
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.	n/a

Outcome 6: (REQUIRED) To expand job opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Indicator	Description	Number
6.a.	Number of increased work hours for individuals with disabilities working in Opportunity Village food aggregation and delivery through the addition of CSA production.	385 hrs.

5. Discuss your community partnerships (include applicant staff and external partners).
 - i. Who were your community partners?
One Vision staff (project coordinator, aggregation coordinator, accounting team, support staff for field day and filling in when needed) North Iowa Fresh (broker, producers, csa consultants, record keeper), 11 business sites who endorsed the program, 7 drop sites (6 overlap with business sites, one public drop site).
 - ii. How did they contribute to the overall results of the FMLFPP project?
One Vision staff coordinated aggregation, on-site details, oversight and training of clients and accounting. North Iowa Fresh consultants provided expertise in CSA development, marketing and troubleshooting. NIF Broker conducted sales of “shares”, sourced produce from producers for the boxes each week. Business site partners acted as on-site coordinators of the project by taking orders/payments, overseeing delivery site and used box collection and being the general liaison between NIF’s broker and the drop site.
 - iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project’s future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMLFPP grant?
Through this project experience, and changes in future goals for the OV facilities, it has been decided (by both One Vision and North Iowa Fresh) that it would be best for NIF to work at an alternate aggregation location for 2019. (Note: A new site has been found.) NIF will continue to run and expand the CSA program for 2019. All sites agreed to promote and host CSA boxes again in 2019.
 - iv. What feedback have the partners provided (specific comments) about the results of the project?
This proved to be a real learning experience for One Vision and those we support. Job skills, confidence and pride were developed through the involvement of clients in this endeavor. All those involved have found employment with other area businesses due to the experiences gained with this opportunity. One Vision has been very successful at finding employment for their more skilled clients and as such the availability of employees with the skills required for the aggregation activities are limited. Priorities for the use of OV facilities have changed and no longer align with running CSA aggregation at their site.

NIF producers are very satisfied with the pilot year of the program and all but two (due to personal reasons) will be participating in the 2019 season. NIF management team are very happy with the success of the first season and are planning to more than double the program for 2019.

CSA Partner sites have expressed overall satisfaction with the program and the drop site logistics and were excited to participate in 2019. CLTel site coordinator sent this comment “Thanks again for all you do, Nothing but positive comments this past year.” Another site host commented “The NIF coordinator was very easy to work with and helpful. Accommodating as well. Thank you!”

6. How do you plan to publicize the results?

- i. To whom (i.e. people, entities) do you plan to publicize the project results?
We have shared our results with site hosts, subscribers and the general public at the Open House (25 attendees) that took place on September 23, 2018. We have also shared CSA participation statistics with Healthy Mason City for their progress report and with the North Iowa Local Food Coalition (NILFC) for their annual report. The NIF Broker has also verbally shared the results with the Iowa Food Hub Managers Working Group at a quarterly meeting.

- ii. When do you plan to publicize the results?

Results were published during the 2018 season through these following avenues:
Attached to this report are the following:

- *2018 Bounty Box Brochure*
- *1 minute video promotional video (also was used in 2019)*
- *Press release for 2018 field day*
- *Press release 2019 Bounty sign up*
- *North Iowa Local Food Coalition Annual Report*
- *Web page snapshot from the Healthy Mason City website (a video also exists which mentions the Bounty Box Program and is on their website)*
- *One Vision Newsletter Article*

*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).

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

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

We conducted an early season online survey (Google Forms) of the subscriber and post season online survey of the subscribers, site hosts and producers.

- ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?

Comments from subscribers:

"I found myself looking forward to pick-up day and the challenge of cooking new foods I otherwise would not have purchased."

"It was awesome. It was great to get new veggies bi weekly and to experiment with new recipes. I even did a few vegan meals just because I had the veggies to suffice a whole main dish."

"Yes (the program met my expectations) but I wasn't expecting as many "non-traditional" veggies to be provided."

"This was new and I participated to get a feel for it. It was awesome."

"I feel some went to waste because I wasn't good at planning meals."

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: x Yes
- 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 Funds ONLY)
Personnel:	\$64,780.00	\$66,098.69
Fringe:	\$0.00	\$0.00
Contractual:	\$8,320.00	\$7,920.00
Equipment:	\$0.00	\$0.00
Travel:	\$2,570.00	\$2,604.64
Supplies:	\$2,415.00	\$2,094.28
Other:	\$5,300.00	\$4,671.39
Indirect Costs:	\$8,039.00	\$8,039.00
TOTAL:	\$91,428.00	\$91,428.00

- 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:	\$39,000	\$41,320
Fringe:		
Contractual:		
Equipment:		
Travel:		
Supplies:		
Other:		
Indirect Costs:		
TOTAL:	\$39,000	\$41,320

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).

Positive Experiences:

- *The partnership with One Vision and North Iowa Fresh has been evolving over the past few years, and many good lessons have been learned while OV has been working with NIF to develop the local food business.*
- *Through this project we have been able to establish that there seems to be a demand for a CSA program in our area and we've learned that the customers are really looking for convenience. This insight has helped NIF to better understand the potential to grow the program for the future.*
- *There was great response from the worksites and we found that is a good way to make deliveries convenient for subscribers. (In 2019 NIF added 4 new worksites but have also added 5 public pick up sites).*
- *During the mid-season we aggregated and delivered 30 additional shares for a six weeks period for another CSA program in our area. This gave us experience with handling 30 additional shares per week and helped us to understand how to predict the increased production requirements and personnel needs for the 2019 season.*
- *Throughout the 2018 season NIF producers improved their ability to predict their yields which greatly helped when doing production planning for the 2019 season.*
- *Our aggregation team learned a lot about the (time consuming) process of washing and bagging produce that has resulted in less of these activities at the aggregation site in 2019. It seems to be more efficient to have this step done on farm.*

- *General feedback from subscribers was positive but there were some who had trouble using the produce before it went to waste and/or received too many items they were not familiar with using. This has led us to scale back on the “unique” items in 2019 and offer a Build Your Own Box option.*
- *The meat (one-time) delivery was very successful which has led NIF to offering increased meat as well as bread and honey add-ons in 2019.*

Negative Experiences:

- *We experienced a number of issues of insufficient product being available for all the boxes. Therefore, in 2019 NIF has asked their producers to increase their production and are also planning for back-up producers, when possible, to reduce the time needed for the Broker to tracking down products.*
 - *A number of produce quality issues arose with producers who were new to growing certain crops but most were overcome with education and training, and clear instructions via a Quality Concern Record.*
 - *We had some cases of missing or misplaced products/boxes which led to improved record keeping and tracking systems.*
 - *Staffing constraints were greater than expected. One Vision has been able to find employment for many of their most skilled clients leaving fewer individuals who had the necessary skills to perform the aggregation tasks. Also, some clients didn't have availability for the whole season. As a result, there was more training needed for additional employees and this decreased efficiencies. This along with the change of One Vision priorities has led to the mutual decision to have North Iowa Fresh do their aggregation at an alternate location in 2019.*
- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:
- *All of the goals were achieved except that we only had 28 full equivalent shares for most of the season while our goal was 50. However, we were able to distribute 30 shares for another local CSA for 6 weeks so we could experience the demands of a greater number of shares.*
- 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:
- *It's important to set up a clear system and template for gathering personnel expenses for claims with clear reporting timelines.*
 - *Plan a set schedule for checking in with the project leads on a regular (consistent) basis to keep all members of the project in touch with the project progress.*
 - *Expect there be changes and delays and be flexible with making adjustments, budget adjustments are allowable through the grant and can be a great help when trying to complete the objectives.*
- iv. Discuss if and how the result of this project can be adapted to other regions, communities, and/or agricultural systems.
- *Much of this project could be replicated by other organizations but it would be advisable to have a good relationship with an experienced CSA farm in order to obtain insights that are hard to know before you have the experience. Consider contracting with one such farm as a “mentor” as the program is developed.*
 - *Focusing on work-site wellness works well and should be a good starting point in other communities (and is a good way to reach a large*

number of people quickly) but also offering options to the general public would be advisable.

10. 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.
 - *As mentioned previously, One Vision and North Iowa Fresh have decided to discontinue their partnership, due primarily to OV's changing priorities however NIF has continued the program into 2019. The growth from 28 Full Equivalent shares in 2018 to 78 in 2019 has been a great success and demonstrates the demand to continue to grow the program.*
 - *NIF has updated its software to allow for online ordering and payments and is piloting a Build Your Own Box (you pick subscription) which seems to be going well so far.*
 - *NIF plans to continue to grow the program and has started to offer periodic (every other week or so) deliveries of meat, honey and bread.*
 - *If the program continues to grow it is expected that there will be a need for additional producers to join NIF in the upcoming years to meet the demand for produce, resulting in increased jobs and revenue for local producers.*
 - *The jobs of broker, aggregation team and book keeper will be retained (and expect to increase) as a result of increased sales.*

- 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 project that looks at how a small business (such as NIF) can partner with other small farm business to increase transportation efficiencies in the way of shared distribution system and/or cross-docking or back hauling.*
 - *An evaluation of season extension methods in the way of extending the season of existing producers but also looking at way to work with regional producers to source products earlier and later in the season when it's not available in the immediate area.*