

**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.

<b>Report Date Range:</b> <i>(e.g. October 1, 2016 -September 30, 2017)</i>	October 1, 2017-March 30, 2019
<b>Date Report Submitted</b>	6/5/2019
<b>Grant Agreement Number:</b> <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	17-LFPP-12371952
<b>Recipient Organization Name:</b>	Lutheran Services in Iowa
<b>Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:</b>	Global Greens Refugee Farmer Food Hub: Feasibility Study and Business Plan
<b>Authorized Representative Name:</b>	John Twardos
<b>Authorized Representative Phone:</b>	<a href="mailto:John.twardos@lsiowa.org">John.twardos@lsiowa.org</a>
<b>Authorized Representative Email:</b>	515-633-3062
<b>Year Grant was Awarded:</b>	515-271-7450
<b>Amount of Award:</b>	\$64,364

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 Vaage\_\_\_\_; Email: [andrea.vaage@lsiowa.org](mailto:andrea.vaage@lsiowa.org) Phone: 515-271-7315

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

Many of the most-recently arrived refugee groups in Iowa have spent the majority of their lives farming and have expressed a strong desire to farm in Iowa as well. Through LSI's Global Greens Beginning Farmer Training Program families have been connected to land, supplies, training and a variety of direct to consumer markets; however, more research needed to be done in order to discover the potential for an aggregated, local food hub in the greater Des Moines, Iowa area. During the planning grant, LSI completed a feasibility study for the Global Greens Food Hub, researched current market potential, pricing and fee structures and evaluated necessary supplies and infrastructure. LSI also created a sustainable business plan to lay out the on-going operations and growth goals for the Global Greens Food Hub. Primary findings included the need for participant farmers to access larger farm sites in order to be successful selling to wholesale markets at scale. LSI trialed expanding the aggregated CSA and identifying wholesale buyers. Through the pilot, LSI determined the aggregated CSA would be most profitable for the program and for farmers. Individual farmers with operations at scale may need future training to access wholesale markets semi-independently.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0581-0287. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 4 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable sex, marital status, or familial status, parental status religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program (not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

2. Please provide the approved project's objectives:

Objectives		Completed	
		Yes	No*
1	Complete a feasibility study for the Global Greens Food Hub to aggregate, scale up and diversify the sales opportunities for Global Greens farmers.	X	
2	Sub-Objective 1: Determine supply and demand levels for a variety of potential food hub sales outlets	X	
3	Sub-Objective 2: Determine pricing levels and fee structures that are fair to farmers but also sustainable for the Food Hub	X	
4	Sub-Objective 3: Evaluate needs and sources for necessary software, warehouse/processing facilities, infrastructure, supplies, staffing and marketing of the Food Hub	X	
5	Sub-Objective 4: Determine land needs and potential larger sites for farmers to be able to meet demand levels for larger scale accounts	X	
6	Sub-Objective 5: Based on the outcome of the feasibility study analysis, craft a business plan to lay out the on-going operations and growth goals for the Global Greens Food Hub.	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
<p><b>Hire Consulting Agency:</b> Global Greens hired Iowa State University Community Food Systems Program to complete the feasibility study and business plan. The project team was comprised of staff from the Value Added Agriculture team, Local Food System staff, Community Design Lab and staff from the ISU Small Business Development Center.</p> <p>LSI originally bid services for background research, assistance with a pilot study, land analysis, and development of feasibility study and business plan, with 3 businesses or organizations responding. Matson Consulting in South Carolina and Lynne Brown, individual consultant, were also considered. ISU was chosen due to their large and diverse project team, understanding of local</p>	<p>Objective 1: Complete a feasibility study for the Global Greens Food Hub to aggregate, scale up and diversify the sales opportunities for Global Greens farmers.</p>

context and ability to meet regularly in person.	
<p><b>Conference Attendance:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two staff members attended National Incubator Training Farm Initiative (NIFTI) Conference from 11/6/2017 to 11/10/ 2017 to connect with incubator farms involved with food aggregation.</li> <li>• Food Hub Specialist (FHS) attended National Food Hub conference in Albuquerque, NM on 3/26-3/31/ 2018. FHS attended free, personalized technical assistance session with Gary Matson, Vice President of Small Farmer Programs and Outreach, at conference.</li> </ul>	Objective 1
<p><b>Farmer Engagement &amp; Evaluation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FHS and other staff performed end of year assessments with 23 farmers in November and December 2017 to evaluate desire to sell to diverse markets, including wholesale or aggregated CSA. From there, a lottery for CSA orders was conducted. Each farmer selling to the CSA completed a crop plan and seed order with the Land and Production Specialist.</li> </ul>	Objective 1
<p><b>Partner Meetings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FHS met with planning group members individually on parts of the project that were relevant to each member throughout the project period</li> <li>• Global Greens convened a planning group for addressing the need for a larger land site. 10 people attended on November 13, including Practical Farmers of Iowa, Des Moines Community Foundation, Greater Des Moines Partnership, and Wallace Center of Iowa.</li> </ul>	Objective 1
<p><b>Background Research &amp; Best Practices:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ISU and FHS conducted research of other food models to gather best practices. ISU visited Global Growers in Atlanta, Georgia on 2/27/18 to gather information and meet with peers.</li> <li>• ISU and FHS had a conference call with New Entry Food Hub manager on 1/25/18 to discuss margins, pricing, and communications strategies with farmers.</li> </ul>	Objective 1
<p><b>Partner Meetings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff met with Dogpatch Urban Gardens, Prudent Produce, Hoq, Global Soul Kitchen, Prep Kings, Iowa Choice Harvest, Brightside Kitchen, Taste To Go, Harbinger, Grounds For Celebration, Blues</li> </ul>	Sub-Objective 1, Determine tools for measuring local product demand levels within current wholesale markets

<p>Cafe and Hy-Vee and assessed market potential of each potential outlet. Staff then completed form to evaluate logistics and pros/cons of selling to each vendor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FHS met with Iowa Choice Harvest on May 3 to determine whether Global Greens produce such as African eggplant or mustard greens could be commercially frozen and serve as a value-added option for farmers</li> <li>• At the end of the pilot, the ISU Project lead met with pilot markets to gain feedback on whether Global Greens farmers could meet demand and if logistics of working with Global Greens met the needs of wholesale buyers.. She also staffed CSA drop sites to collect feedback from customers.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Pilot Selection:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FHS and ISU Project Lead selected 3 wholesale markets as a pilot in 2018: Blues Café, Prudent produce, and Grounds for Celebration coffee. FHS reached out to contacts every week with a list of available produce and determine if any deliveries could be made.</li> </ul>	Sub-Objective 1
<p><b>Food Safety for Pilot Sales:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FHS and Interpreters provided food safety training for 20 farmers on 2/17/2018. All farmers selling to CSA were required to attend</li> </ul>	Sub-Objective 1
<p><b>Fee Structure Research:</b>  FHS researched fee structure models of similar incubator CSA models and of local pricing from Iowa Food Coop and other purchasers. FHS worked with farmers to determine fair prices for all products grown by farmers in the program. FHS also provided opportunities for farmers to discuss price during wholesale or CSA deliveries. FHS set Food Hub prices for each product grown at Global Greens Farm. Prices established for CSA purchases were the ceiling and individual purchases were negotiated with farmers for other wholesale orders. The 15% margin established in the business plan was determined partially by prices able to be offered to farmers and partially by the need to set a margin high enough to cover some business expenses.</p>	Sub-Objective 2, Research pricing and fee structure models
<p>Value Added Ag staff researched warehouse, processing facility, software, and infrastructure needs as part of the feasibility study.  <i>Software</i>  FHS and ISU Project Lead researched software programs for food hubs including Local Food</p>	Sub-Objective 3: Evaluate needs and sources for necessary software, warehouse/processing facilities, infrastructure, supplies, staffing and marketing of the Food Hub

Marketplace, Farmigo, and Kivalogic. Global Greens used Quickbooks and Excel for pilot study. It was determined that the margin LSI set in the business plan wouldn'tt generate enough revenue to justify the use of more advanced software beyond Quickbooks in the next 1-3 years.

*Infrastructure*

FHS identified supply/infrastructure needs for the season and used this information to inform decision on where to aggregate. Food hub costs informed overall program budget planning process. The Food Hub utilized the Iowa Food Cooperative to aggregate produce, which already had all infrastructure needed, including cooler space and loading dock. Other sites were considered for aggregation, including the Global Greens farm. These sites proved insufficient due to lacking infrastructure (in the case of the farm) or the expense of renting a site for months at a time, rather than the daily rental rate offered by the Iowa Food Cooperative.

*Marketing and Communications*

FHS and ISU Project Lead met with LSI's marketing team to discuss pilot advertising needs for food hub and brand promotion on 6/6/18. The marketing department developed mock-ups of various materials they could develop along with the costs of materials that could not be done in house. LSI's Marketing team produced labels for shipments as part of the pilot. In addition to the core marketing work, Kathryn Gamble photographed farmers throughout the season both in the field and at their homes in order to collect photos, recipes, and stories for future marketing campaigns for the food hub, including a potential cookbook.

Global Greens Staff met with each farmer individually to determine their long term land needs and interests. Aggregating this information, ISU created a Land Needs document to give to potential land owners which outlines the total acreage and infrastructure that is needed for a larger land site. Using this information, LSI completed a series of meetings with developers, landowners, and other groups to start the process of finding a larger land site.

**Meetings:**

- Met with farmers on 2/1/18 to discuss land and sales goals.
- GG staff conducted focus group with farmers to explore potential land site on

Sub-Objective 4, Determine land needs and potential larger sites for farmers to be able to meet demand levels for larger scale accounts

<p>9/22/18.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PS visited potential land site on 7/25/18; follow up meeting on 2/15/19 to negotiate lease requirements if LSI was to utilize land in 2020.</li> <li>• Program team presented on farmer identified land needs to local group of funders and partners, including Greater Des Moines Partnership and Des Moines Community Foundation on 11/13/19.</li> <li>• LSI met with Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation to determine what natural resource or agricultural easements or other partnerships would be possible if LSI was able to rent or buy a larger land site.</li> <li>• LPS and FHS met with a local developer interested in starting an agrihood development about 15 miles outside Des Moines.</li> <li>• Program Director presented on Global Greens land needs at Eat Greater Des Moines Conference on 3/6/19, resulting in several leads for land.</li> </ul>	
<p>The feasibility study and the business plan ended up being drafted more or less concurrently. The business Plan and Feasibility Study draft were reviewed with ISU and program staff. After the first revision was completed, FHS sent out draft to project partners: Gary Huber, Iowa Food Coop; Gary Matteson, Farm Credit Council; Linda Gobberdiel, Food and You LLC; and Caitlin Szymanski, Iowa State University Local Foods team. Partners reviewed the plan and delivered feedback to FHS, with a follow up conversation in person or via phone.</p> <p>Specific feedback was gained from Gary Matteson, who has worked on gathering data about food hubs at a national level:</p> <p>LPS and program supervisor conducted a review of the business plan via phone on March 26. Matteson shared that the business plan was realistic and grounded in solid location conditions regarding ability of program to scale up to wholesale accounts. Reviewer suggested LSI move forward with a plan to scale up only the CSA portions of the operation, due to risk associated with wholesale markets.</p> <p>The business plan primarily focuses on the aggregated CSA, which was most profitable for the Global Greens program and is a feasible model to</p>	<p>Sub-Objective 5: Based on the outcome of the feasibility study analysis, craft a business plan to lay out the on-going operations and growth goals for the Global Greens Food Hub.</p>

scale up with all farmers, since orders can be negotiated in winter, staff can assist with developing a crop plan, and communication only needs to happen between the FHS and farmers. In other cases, the FHS must be a middleman between farmers and the buyer.	
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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)
<p><b>Partner Quarterly Meetings</b> The Global Greens staff were not able to schedule consistent quarterly meetings with the original group identified as Advisory Board members.</p>	<p>Getting partners to gather at the same time and place on a quarterly basis was a challenge for LSI staff during the project period. Different partners had different interest areas and strengths that they contributed to the project. Instead of gathering partners as a group on a quarterly basis, LSI staff decided to conduct individual meetings with partners to share project updates and solicit advice and feedback from partners based on their area of expertise.. Prior to this LFPP grant award, the Global Greens program had an informal advisory board in place. However, meetings were generally limited to once a year and mostly involved program updates, with limited time for advisor input. Due to this, several board members were inactive. The vision for the food hub project was to revitalize this Board and utilize individuals identified in our proposal as primary contacts. When staff reached out to determine interest in the project, most participants indicated a desire to participate on an as needed basis to tap into their specific skillset. The two primary areas that came out of this exploration included land site development and food hub/marketing development. A team of advisory members and other influential groups in Des Moines convened in November 2018 to learn about land analysis results from the ISU study. One-on-one meetings were then held with each partner to determine whether they would be able to assist in either finding land, financing, or assisting with infrastructure development. The marketing group blossomed into a project to leverage the Global Greens brand to help market the specific cultural produce grown by Global Greens farmers. Ideally, this will result in the publication of a cookbook that will promote these vegetables and help customers feel connected to farmers’ stories.</p>
<p><b>Pricing and Fee Structure.</b> Determining a pricing structure that met needs of farmers while also allowed Global Greens to take a margin of sales</p>	<p>Farmers and staff agreed on a set of prices at the beginning of the season. However, the prices farmers desired changed throughout the season</p>

<p>was challenging.</p>	<p>based on demand of their products in other markets. Additionally, prices offered by pilot buyers (wholesale or restaurant) fluctuated due to changing prices in the general marketplace. Staff had to communicate back with farmers to see if they were willing to sell their product at a lower price than agreed upon to meet demand. This extra communication, exacerbated by working with farmers who are non-native English speakers or do not speak English, slowed down the response to the buyer and often resulted in lost sales. Staff made several changes to improve communication, such as creating a picture-based communication board at the Global Greens farm to alleviate this issue. However, communicating prices from outside buyers is still difficult. LSI believes training farmers to proactively develop relationships with outside buyers and to provide technical assistance for farmers to master the record-keeping and technology skills needed to communicate with wholesale buyers will be necessary moving forward.</p>
<p><b>Low Sales to Pilot Markets.</b> While staff met with and developed relationships with a variety of potential wholesale buyers, sales to these accounts was fairly limited due to the amount of product available during the growing season. Unusual temperature, flooding, and drought all contributed to an especially difficult season for our farmers.</p>	<p>LSI's CSA is the primary aggregated outlet we operate and it was difficult to find farmers with extra food to sell to our pilot markets when many crops failed this year due to extreme weather events. ISU project specialist met with wholesale buyers to determine if there were any specific vegetables they preferred to purchase from Global Greens farmers. Since farmers don't have the land to grow one crop at wholesale scale, we will need to identify a select few that may be niche in the Des Moines marketplace, such as African eggplant, mustard greens, long beans, or other culturally-specific produce.</p>

- 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.	<b>Total number of consumers, farm and ranch operations, or wholesale buyers reached</b>	27
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	27
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	27
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	27

<b>2.</b>	<b>Total number of individuals (culinary professionals, institutional kitchens, entrepreneurs such as kitchen incubators/shared-use kitchens, etc.) reached</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>2.a.</b>	The number that gained knowledge on how to access, produce, prepare, and/or preserve locally and regionally produced agricultural products	17
<b>2.b.</b>	The number that reported an intention to access, produce, prepare, and/or preserve locally and regionally produced agricultural products	15
<b>2.c.</b>	The number that reported supplementing their diets with locally and regionally produced agricultural products that they produced, prepared, preserved, and/or obtained	11

**Indicator 2:**

LSI connected with the following restaurants or catering companies during the pilot wholesale study. Of these, 15 indicated that they currently purchased produce or other products from local producers. 11 of these went on to all place at least one order with LSI during this grant cycle.

Contact List	Bought From LSI during grant cycle
HOQ	x
Harbinger	x
Grounds For Celebration	x
Dogpatch Urban Gardens	x
Wellmark Blues Café	x
Farm Table Delivery	x
Prudent Produce	x
Global Soul Kitchen	x
LSI's Wellness Department	x
Central College Dining Services	x
Dinner Delights	x
Hy-Vee-West Des Moines	
Gateway Market	
Iowa Choice Harvest	
Taste To Go	
Prep Kings	
Brightside Kitchen	

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

Indicator	Description	Aggregated CSA	Wholesale
<b>1.</b>	<b>Sales increased as a result of marketing and/or promotion activities during the project performance period.</b>		
	Original Sales Amount (in dollars) (2017 season sales)	\$29,609.42	\$997.76
	Resulted Sales Amount (in dollars) (2018 season sales)	\$56,480.00	\$1,951.20
	Percent Change $((\frac{n \text{ final} - n \text{ initial}}{n \text{ initial}}) * 100 = \%$	90.75%	95.56%

Indicator	Description	Aggregated CSA	Wholesale
2.	change) <b>Customer counts increased during the project performance period.</b>		
	Original Customer Count	47 shares regular season; 44 Fall	9
	Resulted Customer Count	38 full shares regular season, 109 half shares= 92.5 shares regular; 79 shares Fall	11
	Percent Change $((\text{final} - \text{initial}) / \text{initial}) * 100 = \%$ change)	97.9% Regular Season; 79.5% Fall	22.22%

**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	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	3
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	18
2.b.	A gained knowledge about new market opportunities through technical assistance and education programs	27
3.	<b>Number of</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)	6
3.b.	Jobs maintained/created	0
3.c.	New beginning farmers who went into local/regional food production	27
3.d.	Socially disadvantaged famers who went into local/regional food production	27
3.e.	Business plans developed	1

1.f Global Greens worked to expand our existing CSA model, including an institutional drop site that would also allow us to sell to that corporation's cafeteria. Blues Café, Prudent Produce, and Grounds for Celebration were our primary wholesale outlets we sold to as part of the pilot project.

2.a. Farmers with an increase in sales saw an average increase of 139% from 2017 to 2018. Six farmers gained income during this project for the first time, while the remaining increased sales overall from revenue gained during the pilot study.

**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	27
2.	Number of those individuals who reported increasing their food safety skills and knowledge	27
3.	Number of growers or producers who obtained on-farm food safety certifications (such as Good Agricultural Practices or Good Handling Practices)	0

**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.	\$33,849

5.a. For this project, the largest barriers for expansion on the part of the program are land access and transportation. Global Greens farmers on the incubator training site are able to sell to the aggregated CSA or wholesale markets; however, these farmers are only able to access up to a quarter acre of land. The goal for these farmers is that they are able to graduate from the site and transition onto land of their own, usually between 2-5 acres. Development pressures are very high in the Des Moines metro, as several towns and counties near Des Moines are among the fastest growing in the country. This makes long-term land access difficult for farmers. Finding a farm is possible outside of the metro, but farmers would need to sell enough to justify the increase in travel expenses and time. Most families are unwilling to move to rural areas, as jobs for family members and support systems are located in Des Moines.

**Outcome 6: Complete site analysis for product aggregation in Des Moines as well as potential collaboration with other Food Hubs around the state**

Indicator	Description	Number
6.a.	Number of site analysis studies completed including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Circulation on site and facility connections</li> <li>· Parking and loading capacity</li> <li>· Site context and ordinance review</li> <li>· Distribution routes</li> </ul>	2
6.b.	Number of completed site budgets completed with one-time and on-going costs	2

6.a., 6.b.: Site analysis and budgets were only completed for two locations. The first was our existing location at Global Greens farm, with the option of utilizing more space for food aggregation. The second was with a partner organization, the Iowa Food Coop. The analysis of this space included successful lease negotiation. Staff decided to use this location for the pilot and to determine future needs after the feasibility study once a land site is potentially identified so that distribution routes make sense with the possibility of a new production location.

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

**i. Who were your community partners?**

Most of our community partners identified in the grant proposal remain the same and include the ISU Design Lab and Community Food Systems group, Gary Matteson, Linda Gobberdiel, and Gary Huber of the Iowa Food Cooperative. Two new community partners provided staff time to assist with the project: a photographer, Kathryn Gamble, and Brian Tapp with the Small Business Development Center.

Other changes to community partners include those who are interested in partnering with us as we search for land and financing to expand the incubator site. We are fortunate to have this aspect of the project move forward on an accelerated timeline. The Greater Des Moines Partnership, Practical Farmers of Iowa, and Sustainable Iowa Land Trust have all committed to assisting LSI in a search for a new land site within 20 miles of the LSI office that has 60-100 acres of tillable land. These specifications were developed during ISU's land analysis.

**ii. How did they contribute to the overall results of the FMLFPP project?**

Partners assisted in two crucial areas of the pilot project outside of general sales to wholesale markets: developing a strong brand and finding more land for farmers to scale up production. Kathryn Gamble provided professional photography for the program to use in marketing efforts to aggregated CSA customers and wholesale buyers. She also worked with LSI to develop a concept for a Global Greens cookbook that will feature some of the unique produce Global Greens farmers produce in order to find a niche sales opportunity for restaurants and other buyers, if the project can be developed and further funded.

The partnership with Gary Huber of the Iowa Food Cooperative resulted in LSI locating an aggregation facility that could be rented out one day per week. This facility has adequate refrigeration space, loading docks, and packing space for our current operation and the one-day rental is extremely cost-effective.

Land partners presented at conferences and to their networks in order to broadcast the need for Global Greens to access more land, in order that participant farmers can scale up operations to a level where selling higher volumes of produce at a lower price point to wholesale, institutional, or restaurant buyers makes sense for their business.

**iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMLFPP grant?**

Partners involved in the Global Greens cookbook and other marketing projects have committed to working with LSI until the project is completed.

ISU continues to serve as a facilitator of local food project throughout the state and has since connected LSI Global Greens to several land opportunities and professional development trainings since serving as a project partner.

**iv. What feedback have the partners provided (specific comments) about the results of the project?**

Gary Matteson of Farm Credit Services specifically provided in-depth feedback around the business plan, stating that the plan was very grounded and realistic about LSI's ability to sustain the hub without additional grant funding. While LSI will be able to cover a portion of costs using the aggregated CSA model, outside funding will still be needed in the next 3-5 years unless sales increase substantially.

Many of the restaurant partners shared that the need is greatest for fruit, produce available in early spring, and for farmers to be technologically savvy and able to send text message updates about what produce is available. For our farmers, who do not have access to long term plots where perennials or season extension infrastructure is built, this can serve as a major barrier. In addition, the aggregated model is necessary for LSI to maintain since most farmers do not have the linguistic or technology skills needed to compete for sales to restaurants and other institutional buyers.

7. **How do you plan to publicize the results?**

i. **To whom (i.e. people, entities) do you plan to publicize the project results?**

LSI has already shared project results with several local partners, including the Johnston County Poor Farm, which is looking into starting their own incubator program. LSI Food Hub Specialist also meets quarterly with the Iowa Food Hub Working Group and will share the business plan and other results at those meetings.

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

**\*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).**

LSI has shared the business plan and land feasibility study with local partners, but impact results will not be published until December 2019.

Promotional stickers used on produce boxes for deliveries to wholesale buyers are included as an attachment to this report.

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

In addition to convening meetings with project partners and the land search group, LSI met with the Johnston County Historic Poor Farm staff to discuss the model and share ideas or concerns for implementing an aggregated food hub in Central Iowa.

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

The Iowa State University Extension project specialist developed and administered surveys in person to members of the aggregated CSA and wholesale buyers. The ISU specialist also visited over the phone and in person with the World Peas Food Hub manager. LSI Food Hub Specialist administered a survey via email to all members of the CSA.

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

Most feedback from this partner, the World Peas Food Hub, and others revolves around ensuring margins are high enough to cover some program costs, while also pricing produce in a way that helps farmers earn income, but is realistically priced to be similar to wholesale prices farmers would encounter from other buyers.

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, \$1951.20 generated and how was it used to further the objectives of this project?

Revenue generated only includes sales to pilot (non-CSA) markets including to restaurants and wholesalers (Grounds for Celebration, Wellmark cafeteria, Prudent produce). The revenue generated covers direct costs of aggregating and delivering the produce.

Gross Pilot revenue (non CSA): \$1951.20

**Net Revenue (after paying farmers for vegetables): \$36.20**

- 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:	\$30,382	\$30,923.81
Fringe:	\$6,076	\$5,753.26
Contractual:	\$19,000	\$18,994.30
Equipment:	\$0	\$0
Travel:	\$930	\$286.91
Supplies:	\$121	\$0
Other:	\$0	\$0
Indirect Costs:	\$7,855	\$7,778.19
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$64,364</b>	<b>\$63,736.47</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:	\$14,594	\$18,049.52
Fringe:	\$2,918	\$3,593.48
Contractual:	\$12,206	\$12,480.62
Equipment:	\$0	\$0

Travel:	\$0	\$0
Supplies:	\$541	\$0
Other:	\$0	\$0
Indirect Costs:	\$4,131	\$0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$33,849</b>	<b>\$34,123.62</b>

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).**

- Aggregating food for wholesale markets such as restaurants, grocery stores and institutions is especially difficult when working with very small farmers, who range in acreage from 1/8 of an acre to 5 acres. The key to making money in these markets is volume. Most of the farmers LSI works with didn't have the volume of produce to make it worth either the farmer or for LSI to aggregate and sell to this type of market for the pilot. Access to land was identified as the largest barrier for success of a wholesale project long-term, as farmers would not be able to scale up past direct-to-consumer markets unless they were able to farm at greater efficiencies of scale.
- Sharing infrastructure with a local food cooperative worked really well. By subleasing this space for 1 day a week to pack CSA boxes and do some aggregation for other markets, LSI was able to save money and the time it would take to make any other building meet food safety standards. Going forward, LSI will pursue sharing aggregation space, cooler space and other capital expenses so that it can continue to run a lean business.
- In Iowa, the largest barrier is population density and the market potential for the volume of sales needed to maintain a food hub. Over the past several years, food hubs throughout Iowa have failed due to low sales and inability to access larger urban markets. Several experts have noted that, at minimum, \$1 million in sales is needed for a food hub to be sustainable. Food hubs that serve as a bridge between direct to consumer and wholesale outlets, such as an aggregated CSA, may be able to operate with only \$500,000 in sales due to higher margins. We believe the aggregated CSA model may work best for the Des Moines metro, where individuals have higher incomes and a lower cost of living than the national average, but where population as a whole could not support the volume of sales needed to make a produce-focused wholesale food hub viable.

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

The pilot project and the feasibility study both resulted in a realization that organizationally, starting a wholesale-focused food hub is not feasible. Starting a wholesale food hub requires large volumes of produce, farmers who are willing and able to sell at competitive prices, and a large enough market to be able to achieve economies of scale for the food hub. After evaluating the feasibility study and the pilot project, none of these three requirements were found to be sufficient for LSI to be primarily a wholesale food hub. With this being said, the study concluded that a direct-to-consumer model in a smaller market like Des Moines can be more financially viable. LSI operates in an in-between space with the aggregated CSA, as farmers are able to sell to one buyer (LSI). LSI takes a margin to cover operating, marketing, and customer relation costs and does all management of the aggregated CSA. This model also shows potential to expand to corporate or institutional sites in order to sell produce to a targeted business or organization, such as LSI's drop site at Wellmark.

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:**

Managing a consultant to make sure that they are doing what we want them to do took more time and was more difficult than expected. The clearer the expectations are in writing for the consultant at the beginning of the project, the more smoothly the project will go.

In addition, hiring the right consultant is extremely important to get a quality feasibility study and business plan. Significant time should be spent interviewing and reviewing potential consultants. Considerations for a quality consulting group should be number and expertise of staff available to assist in the project, understanding of both the local and national food context, ability to gather relevant primary and secondary data, and ability to meet with project staff on a frequent basis.

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

The feasibility study and business plan are both very specific to our locality and business respectively. However, this project should show other relatively small metro areas a realistic business plan in a competitive market. Other programs looking to analyze the feasibility of expanding beyond direct-to-consumer markets to aggregated or wholesale markets could review the primary areas of study completed in this plan: staffing, land analysis, infrastructure needs, market analysis, and organizational capacity to determine if scaling up fits with their unique program structure.

**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.

Future work of the Global Greens Food Hub and aggregated CSA will be directed by both the business plan developed during this grant period, but also through the vision and values of the Food Hub that were determined through meetings with farmers and community stakeholders.

*Vision*

A community that values refugees and refugee farmers and a food system that supports and creates economically viable food businesses

*Values:*

*Integrity:* we hold the virtues of sound environmental practices and equitable social opportunities as a foundation to our work

*Farmer First:* Global Greens refugee farmers are critical to our work and grow real, sustainable and reliable market opportunities for our farmers

*Democratic:* intentional participation to develop a fair, equitable and just food system

*Dignified:* we honor the gifts and talents of our farmers and staff that contribute to solutions to systemic social issues surrounding refugees

*Quality:* we promote high quality, fresh, and organic production practices

This process of determining values and a vision for the program through focus groups and meetings with the refugee growers was an invaluable part of the feasibility study process. If our growers have not bought into the vision, we cannot move forward on expanding the work of the aggregated CSA and Food Hub. The model developed of farmer participation in the goals and outcomes of the Food Hub has already brought increased involvement from growers. In 2019, one farmer offered to volunteer to pack CSA shares in order to learn more about Global Greens internal operations and to better understand aggregated markets for themselves.

Implementation of the business plan that was created as a result of this project has already begun. Based on the results of this project, LSI will make the primary focus on growing our direct-to-consumer market through the Global Greens CSA. Based on our business plan, we expect to increase sales by about 35% each in both 2019 and 2020. This growth will create an estimated \$140,000 in sales for farmers and will result in LSI hiring an additional part-time staff. LSI will continue to pursue some restaurants and other wholesale outlets with which relationships were built as part of the pilot project. LSI will maintain narrow criteria for restaurants and wholesale opportunities to make sure they make sense for LSI staff and farmers.

- 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?

LSI plans to continue building upon the work of the aggregated CSA model. LSI will continue to identify new corporate and public drop-sites and will follow the business plan to determine targets for growth in shares. Additional objectives will be to locate a larger land site in order for farmers to scale up their operations and to continue providing training in the areas of selling to wholesale markets, post harvest handling, and food safety. Finally, LSI will continue marketing and promotion efforts aimed at providing local restaurants and consumer’s information on the culturally specific produce LSI Global Greens growers provide through a cookbook project. LSI will also continue to develop the Global Greens brand in order to build awareness of the aggregated CSA and food hub.

A summary timeline for the continuation of the project is as follows:

- Increase awareness and sales of cultural produce to restaurants and institutions through publishing and promotion of a Global Greens grower directed cookbook.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
Photography for project	December 2019
Recipe Development – Global Greens farmers and partner chefs	December 2019
Content editing/graphic design	February 2020
Publishing Cookbook	April 2020
Promotion events and cooking classes	Summer 2020

- Increased training and technical assistance to Global Greens growers on wholesale and CSA models, marketing, Farmer English proficiency, food safety practices and business development.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
Classes on wholesale, CSA models, marketing, and business	Curriculum provides 3 levels of classes on each topic: provided winters

development	2020-2022
Identify larger land site for graduated farmers	New land must be located by summer of 2020 in order to expand food hub

- Implement Global Greens business plan developed during the planning project, with an average projected growth of 33% each year in gross revenue from 2019-2021.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
Maintain retention rate of at least 50% for existing drop sites.	Annual goal
Continue most effective marketing and outreach strategies identified during pilot project.	Outreach to be completed annually, January-May
Identify new drop sites for 2020	April 2020