

**Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)
Final Performance Report**

The final performance report summarizes the outcome of your FMPP award objectives. As stated in the FMPP Terms and Conditions, you will not be eligible for future FMPP or Local Food Promotion Program grant funding unless all close-out procedures are completed, including satisfactory submission of this final performance report.

This final report will be made available to the public once it is approved by FMPP staff. Write the report in a way that promotes your project's accomplishments, as this document will serve as not only a learning tool, but a promotional tool to support local and regional food programs. Particularly, recipients are expected to provide both qualitative and quantitative results to convey the activities and accomplishments of the work.

The report is limited to 10 pages and is due **within 90 days** of the project's performance period end date, or sooner if the project is complete. Provide answers to each question, or answer "not applicable" where necessary. It is recommended that you email or fax your completed performance report to FMPP staff to avoid delays:

FMPP Phone: 202-690-4152; Email: USDAFMPPQuestions@ams.usda.gov; Fax: 202-690-4152

Should you need to mail your documents via hard copy, contact FMPP staff to obtain mailing instructions.

Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	October 1, 20015-September 30, 2016
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Recipient Organization Name:	NIU Center for Governmental Studies
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Farmers to Markets to Consumers: Removing Obstacles to Growth
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-FMPPX-IL-0058
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Beardstown, IL; Dixon, IL; Ottawa, IL; Sterling, IL
Total Awarded Budget:	\$78,656

FMPP staff may contact you to follow up for long-term success stories. Who may we contact?

- Same Authorized Representative listed above (check if applicable).
 Different individual: Name: _____; Email: _____; Phone: _____

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1. State the goals/objectives of your project as outlined in the grant narrative and/or approved by FMPP staff. If the goals/objectives from the narrative have changed from the grant narrative, please highlight those changes (e.g. “new objective”, “new contact”, “new consultant”, etc.). You may add additional goals/objectives if necessary. For each item below, qualitatively discuss the progress made and indicate the impact on the community, if any.

i. Goal/Objective 1: Estimate Demand for Local and Regional Products

a. Progress Made: For each of the 4 markets, the following was completed:

- Interviews with all farm vendors in season 1 and repeated in season 2 regarding supply and demand for their products
- Intercept survey of market customers regarding the existing market, their desired farm products, their market shopping habits, etc.
- Identifying competing markets and determining a geographic market area for each market
- Demographic analysis of the population served by each market
- Suggestions to each market manager regarding the demand they may not be meeting at their market

The tasks completed resulted in findings that differed substantially from one community to another. In Beardstown, residents looked to the market as a primary source of local fresh produce, and supply often did not meet demand. In Dixon, market visitors did not rely on the market as a primary source of fresh produce and were more interested in prepared foods. The Dixon market was also a source of information on how to order fresh meats from area farms for later pick up. Sterling customers were able to find much of what they were seeking, with a good variety of vendors. Ottawa customers also had a good selection of produce available.

b. Impact on Community: The market managers learned what was most important to their customers and were able to seek out those kind of vendors. Sometimes a new technique had to be employed to attract vendors. For example, Beardstown lured new vendors by connecting the produce sales with popular local nonprofits, such as the library.

ii. Goal/Objective 2: Identify Obstacles to Farmer Participation

a. Progress Made: for each of the 4 markets, all of the farmers within a one hour drive were contacted by telephone and asked about their farm, their thoughts on farmers markets, and obstacles to participating in the market. In addition, each farmer vendor at each of the subject markets was interviewed in person and asked how the market could be improved so they could sell more and any other thoughts on the market. Vendors were re-interviewed during the second season.

What was learned was that many of the farmers did not come to the market with selling more as their goal. They viewed the market as an opportunity to advertise the products they sold at their farm, as a community service, or as a social opportunity. They cited a lack of manpower or additional acreage as reasons for not bringing more product to the market, but these were obstacles they were not interested in overcoming since increased sales was not a high priority.

b. Impact on Community: The market managers had success in attracting new vendors when they understood what the vendors were looking for in the market

and what the customers wanted. For example, Dixon was able to attract new vendors selling prepared foods and farmers advertising poultry products that could be ordered.

iii. **Goal/Objective 3: Develop Recommendations to Address Obstacles**

a. **Progress Made:** A plan was developed for each market. These are summarized below. However, it was realized that overcoming the obstacles to increasing sales was not a high priority for the farmers. Therefore, the plans focus on growing the markets so they function well for the farmers and the community in whatever role the market plays. The plans reflect this.

Dixon

- Adjust calendar: Reduce to ten markets.
- Change musical entertainment: All local artists and acoustic style will have broader appeal to residents.
- Offer more prepared food: Relax rules on food preparation so vendors can demonstrate how their products can be used and also generate revenue from prepared foods.
- Attract more farmers: Reach out to farmers on list
- Educate vendors and volunteers: Offer Farmers Market 101
- Improve visibility: New signage especially directional signs from major routes

Sterling

- Attract more farmers: Reach out to farmers on list
- Avoid duplication and establish identity: Collaborate with Rock Falls market, consider calendar changes and board changes
- Improve visibility: Investigate sign code issues and possible use of temporary signs
- Educate vendors and volunteers: Offer Farmers Market 101

Ottawa

- Improve visibility: New signage especially along major routes
- Address management challenges: Create a Friends of the Market group to ease workload on manager
- Increase attractiveness to tourists and others: Consider quality art and craft vendors
- Attract more families: Consider children's activities
- Educate vendors and volunteers: Offer Farmers Market 101

Beardstown

- Attract new shoppers: Add products desired by area ethnic groups
- Attract new visitors: Add entertainment appealing to different area residents and workers
- Build community: Add activities and services helpful to the community such as health related information
- Attract area employees: Talk with employers about shift changes and adjust timing of market
- Improve visibility: Add signage both on site to identify vendors and off site directional signs
- Reach low income families: Add SNAP/WIC
- Educate vendors and Volunteers: Offer Farmers Market 101

b. Impact on Community:

1. Dixon: The market expanded on its role as a community event. More popular entertainment, more prepared food, more seating, and an expanded vendor layout made it more attractive to residents. There was an increase in the number of families with children attending.
 2. Sterling: The indoor facility added more useable space allowing for more vendors and better selection for customers. New signage made the building easier to identify. Vendors were happy with the improved facility. They observed that visitors were now visiting the entire building rather than just the vendors in the front room.
 3. Ottawa: More residents and visitors became aware of the market as marketing increased. Tie-ins with local events also made more people aware of the market and led them to utilize it more. The market was easier for tourists to find and well integrated into the tourist experience.
 4. Beardstown: partnerships with healthcare providers and other nonprofits attracted both vendors and customers. Customers benefitted from health screenings and healthy lunches at the market. Elderly residents enjoyed the social and meal aspects of the lunch and picked up produce for the week. Vendors often sold out quickly. Some immigrant shoppers were observed at the market.
2. Quantify the overall impact of the project on the intended beneficiaries, if applicable, from the baseline date (the start of the award performance period, September 30, 2015). Include further explanation if necessary.
- i. Number of direct jobs created: NA
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: NA
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: NA
 - iv. Number of markets expanded: 4
 - v. Number of new markets established: NA
 - vi. Market sales increased by \$insert dollars and increased by insert percentage%. NA
 - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 18 farmers vending at the subject markets benefitted from improvements at the market in terms of higher sales.
 - a. Percent Increase: Farmers were unwilling to provide sales totals so we do not have a percentage increase.

We had hoped to quantify impact in several ways but lack of cooperation from farmers and market managers prevented this. Farmers were unwilling to share sales figures and market managers were too busy to collect other requested data. This was a disappointment and pointed out the difficulty of getting good data on market performance.
3. Did you expand your customer base by reaching new populations such as new ethnic groups, additional low income/low access populations, new businesses, etc.? If so, how?
- i. The Beardstown market succeeded in attracting a significant number of elderly customers. This was achieved by offering an affordable picnic lunch during the market. There also were health tie-ins with the local hospital.

- ii. The Dixon market attracted more families with children by offering children’s activities and family friendly entertainment.
4. Discuss your community partnerships.
- Who are your community partners?
- Dixon:*
 KSB Hospital has contributed \$5,000 towards the cost of entertainment, cooking demonstrations and farm to table activities. These activities will attract customers and educate them on the use of farm products.
 The Next Picture Show, a private art gallery, will provide children’s art activities at the market at no charge. This will attract families with children to the market.
 Stables-This local bar helps with the cost of serving alcohol at the markets. Serving wine and beer has helped to attract customers and keep them at the market longer.
 City of Dixon-Provides City park space for the market and a cash contribution to help with site improvements to make the location more attractive for the market.
- Sterling:*
 Sauk Valley Bank-credit card processing machine allowing the acceptance of credit cards and waives fees for vendors U of I Extension-educational programming at the markets to attract customers and increase sales by showing people how to use the produce
 CGH Medical Center-Does wellness programming at the markets to attract customers and encourage healthy eating
 Knie TV & Appliance-Help acquiring a new oven and maintenance of appliances for commercial kitchen used by vendors
 Local tradesmen-Help with maintenance
 City of Sterling-Provide the building housing the market
- Ottawa:* The area tourism bureau is helping to publicize the market
Beardstown: The Chamber of Commerce is assisting with management of the market.
- i. How have they contributed to the overall results of the FMPP project? See above
 - ii. How will they continue to contribute to your project’s future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMPP grant?
 The relationships that were established with these partners have a good chance of continuing in future years. They are very important in covering costs, attracting customers, and meeting the needs of customers while they are at the market.
5. Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the FMPP project? No contractors.
6. Have you publicized any results yet?* Yes
- i. If yes, how did you publicize the results?
 The results have been publicized in several ways. Interim findings were presented at a workshop we hosted in January, 2016. The workshop was attended by the subject markets as well as over 50 other market managers. Press releases have been released to the area media for each market. These are attached. Results were presented at the Community Development Society annual conference in July, 2016. An article discussing the findings has been submitted to Insights, the publication of the Community Development Society.

- ii. To whom did you publicize the results? Market managers, local food advocates, and community development professionals from across the country.
- iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? Approximately 150 in person at the workshop and conference. A much larger number were reached through the press releases in the media markets for each community.

*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). See attached.

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

- i. If so, how did you collect the information? We interviewed farm vendors and market managers at each market
- ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?
 - The market did a good job of advertising, setting hours and mixing vendors. Getting a younger crowd of workers and good traffic.
 - Renovations in the rear of the building are getting people to visit the vendors in the back.
 - Need more customers, commercial refrigerator and local chicken processor to increase sales.
 - Enjoy the sense of community at the market, fills a social need for the farmers.
 - Feel good about meeting a need of the residents.
 - Market still needs more visibility.
 - Getting more families but fewer older people.
 - Sell at the market as a community service and make a little money.
 - Volunteer sellers help make it possible to be at the market.
 - Mix of sales up and down and the same.
 - Market managers indicated that frequent management turnover made it difficult to assess progress and implement major changes. During the grant period, we worked with 10 different managers across the four markets.

8. Budget Summary:

- i. As part of the FMPP closeout procedures, you are required to submit the SF-425 (Final Federal Financial Report). Check here if you have completed the SF-425 and are submitting it with this report:
- ii. Did the project generate any income? No
 - a. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award? NA

9. Lessons Learned:

- i. Summarize any lessons learned.

The attached article summarizes the lessons learned. The most significant findings are below.

Communities wishing to establish or grow a farmers market should determine the goals of their market and which type of operating model best suits their needs. It is important

to develop an understanding of the customer. Policies must be adopted to support the growth of that particular market model.

Stabilizing market management would make market growth and improvement more attainable. The markets we worked with were one responsibility of an organization that also did many unrelated activities. Thus, the management had no particular expertise in farmers markets and did not devote that much time to the market. In addition, the person acting as market manager turned over very frequently, meaning that relationships established with farmers had to be reestablished and management practices changed from year to year. Finding a way to professionalize and stabilize market management should be a priority.

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

In the case of more sophisticated markets, one size does not fit all. At the beginning of this study it was assumed all markets served the singular purpose of providing local produce to the community. We discovered that was not always the case. Farmers' markets serve purposes specific to their community.

- 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:

While farmers markets were once the primary place to obtain local produce, additional sources of local produce have emerged. Because of this farmers' market serve additional purposes in their communities. Some serve as entertainment or tourist venues; some a source of community wellness and culturally appropriate produce; some provide a community event around which to gather; and some provide local produce year-round. Each community must decide the purpose of their market and then customize their offerings and services.

10. Future Work:

- i. How will you continue the work of this project beyond the performance period? In other words, how will you parlay the results of your project's work to benefit future community goals and initiatives? Include information about community impact and outreach, anticipated increases in markets and/or sales, estimated number of jobs retained/created, and any other information you'd like to share about the future of your project.

We have already offered a workshop to farmers' markets on the findings of this report. Additionally we have presented the findings at the Community Development Conference in St. Paul, Minnesota that past July. We are in the process of planning a conference on developing local economies and the findings of this report will be integrated into that agenda.

- ii. Do you have any recommendations for future activities and, if applicable, an outline of next steps or additional research that might advance the project goals?

We are working with a hops farmer we met at the Ottawa Farmers' Market who has expanded his work to include the development of a microbrewery and restaurant featuring local fare. His enterprise moving beyond production to processing/consumption/distribution is a model for small future businesses. When we interviewed the owner of Tangled Roots Brewing Company in Ottawa, Illinois, he was employing 108 individuals. Scott Struchen will be a primary speaker at our gathering on food production as an engine of local economic development in the spring. The Business Section of the Chicago Tribune (August 2, 2016) featured an article on a second hops farm. Dick Falz harvested about 6,000 pounds of hops for Tangled Roots Brewing Company. Falz hopes to add another 90 acres next year, with an eventual goal of growing hops on more than 200 acres. We hope to increase our understanding of the impact craft breweries and the farms that support them have on the Illinois economy.