

Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) Final Performance Report

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

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

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

LFPP Phone: 202-720-2731; Email: USDALFPPQuestions@ams.usda.gov; Fax: 202-720-0300

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

Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	April 1, 2016 – September 30, 2016
Authorized Representative Name:	Jonathan Spack, Executive Director TSNE
Authorized Representative Phone:	617.523.6565
Authorized Representative Email:	fsgrants@tsne.org
Recipient Organization Name:	Third Sector New England – New Entry Sustainable Farming Project
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Strengthening Local Food Access through Training of Local Farmers and Distribution of Local Produce to Low Income, Limited Access Communities
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-LFPPX-MA-0073
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Massachusetts
Total Awarded Budget:	\$99,685

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

Same Authorized Representative listed above (check if applicable).

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.

Different individual: Name: Jennifer Hashley; Email: Jennifer.hashley@tufts.edu Phone: 978-654-6745 ext. 100

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

- i. **Goal/Objective 1: Develop farmers’ capacities to produce high quality local produce successfully in order to achieve increased production needed to expand low-income markets**

- a. Progress Made:

In the 2016 season, New Entry worked with 30 small-scale beginning and regional farmers to develop their capacities to increase production, diversify their produce offerings, and reach new markets. In the spring, New Entry staff worked with 20 farmers to provide a total of 235 hours of technical assistance. Staff worked with farmers to assess their business plans, develop marketing and crop plans, implement plans in the field, and offer training around soil preparation, production, harvest, and packing for market. Through on-going technical assistance and training before and during the season, New Entry staff supported farmers to improve crop quality as well as production volume, enabling farmers to access new markets and increase their farm revenues. This season the World PEAS Food Hub was able to purchase over \$108,000 worth of fresh locally grown fruits and vegetables from New Entry program farmers, plus an additional \$65,000 worth of produce from small-scale regional family farms. The produce was distributed to over 35 different places in the greater Boston and Merrimack Valley regions.

- b. Impact on Community:

By working directly with beginning farmers to offer business planning assistance, production training, and on-going on-on-one technical support, New Entry provides farmers with the tools they need to learn how to produce high-quality, fresh, healthy food, and market it to the community. Since this project began, 30 small-scale farmers were able to access 5 new markets serving low-income and food insecure children, families, and senior citizens. These new sales channels encouraged farmers to utilize New Entry training to learn how to improve crop quality and increase production volume in order to meet the increased demand for produce. Of the 30 farmers we worked with, 14 increased the volume of produce they sold through the World PEAS Food Hub between 2015 and 2016. Individual sales per farmer increased as well, ranging between a 5% and a 100% increase.

- ii. **Goal/Objective 2: Expand food access in three low-access/low-income communities to increase consumption of fresh, locally-grown fruits and vegetables.**

- a. Progress Made:

In the 2016 season, the World PEAS Food Hub distributed a total of \$85,936 worth of fresh, healthy, locally grown produce to 12 different community sites in the greater Boston and Middlesex County regions, serving 2,316 low-income, food insecure, and under-resourced individuals. Of the \$85,936 worth of produce delivered, New Entry was able to leverage funding to provide \$19,264 worth of produce completely free of charge. To distribute over 100,000 pounds of produce to low-income and low-access people, we partnered with 7 senior centers, 2 child daycare programs, 1 homeless shelter, and a local Women, Infant’s and Children (WIC) program office. In 2016 we reached 506 more low-income individuals than in 2015 by expanding our current partnerships, as well as establishing new relationships to increase access to fresh food. During this reporting period, The World PEAS Food Hub increased participation in our Senior Share program at the Arlington Council on Aging to serve 70 senior

citizens a week, increased from 50 per week in 2015. We also re-launched our SNAP CSA program, serving 10 families for 16 weeks this summer. In addition, we established a new partnership with the Cameron Senior Center in Westford, MA, serving a total of 600 senior citizens over the course of 10 weeks between June and October. Relationships with our existing partners remain strong, and we continued to distribute produce to their clients this season. Please find a full list of partnerships below.

b. Impact on Community:

This project has directly increased access to fresh food for over 2,300 individuals in the communities of Westford, Arlington, Burlington, Lowell, Medford, Dorchester, Waltham, Somerville, Cambridge, and East Boston. Low-income/low access priority areas include: Kit Clark Senior Center, Dorchester MA (tract 25025050700); Community Teamwork, Inc. Child and Family Services Center, Lowell, MA (tract 25017312300), Medford Senior Center, Medford, MA (drawing clients from tract 25017339700), East Boston YMCA (drawing clients from tract 25025051000), and the Springwell Senior Group in Waltham (drawing clients from tract 25017368902). Over the course of the full grant period a total of \$174,840 worth of fresh fruits and vegetables was distributed to at least 4,126 food insecure individuals. Survey data shows that the program increased access to and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables for the majority of participants across all partnerships. Participants self-reported positive impacts on general health and well-being, mental health, and management of chronic disease, as well being prompted to cook more at home, learn how to prepare fresh food, and share meals with others.

Goal/Objective 3: Provide additional income to low-income farmers.

a. Progress Made:

During the 2016 season the World PEAS Food Hub earned in a total of \$251,059 in revenues. Of that, over \$173,000 was paid directly to farmers to purchase their produce for distribution through the World PEAS Food Hub, providing essential yearly income to their families. Individual farmers earned between \$18,606 and \$114 during the season. To assist New Entry program farmers with startup costs in the spring, New Entry made a total of \$16,452 in microloans to our program farmers. Of the 30 farmers we worked with in 2016, 14 increased their sales to the World PEAS Food Hub.

b. Impact on Community:

Many of the farmers who sell to the World PEAS Food Hub are classified as low-income and underserved themselves. Six of our program farmers live in low-income and low-access tracts as identified by the USDA, including in Lawrence and Lowell, MA - 25009251600 (Lawrence); 25017311800 (Lowell); 25017311400 (Lowell MA); 25017312100 (Lowell). The revenue that these farmers generate through their produce sales to the World PEAS Food Hub is essential to their family's yearly income. While income from the program helps these farmers support their families, it also enables them to purchase inputs for their farm business in the upcoming season including seeds, equipment, tools, and materials. By supporting local farmers to distribute fresh fruits and vegetables to our under-served community members we are cultivating a healthy food system from the farmer all the way to the consumer.

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, 2014). Include further explanation if necessary.
 - i. Number of direct jobs created: During the grant period, New Entry hired 25 workshare volunteers, who received a weekly share of produce to take home to their family, in return for their service. New Entry also hired 12 site coordinator volunteers at our food access partner sites. In addition, New Entry hired 2 delivery drivers/warehouse staff. During the grant period New Entry expanded the World PEAS Food Hub Manager

position as well as the Grants and Finance Manager position from part-time to full time during, creating two new full time positions at the organization. We also hired the positions of AmeriCorps VISTA Food Access Facilitator and AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteer Coordinator.

- ii. Number of jobs retained: New Entry re-hired 8 total workshare volunteers and 12 site coordinator volunteers during the grant period. New Entry also retained the full time position of the World PEAS Food Hub Coordinator, as well as 1 seasonal full time position as the Operations Coordinator and 1 driver/warehouse staff.
- iii. Number of indirect jobs created: 5 farmers established new farm enterprises during the grant period, and were assisted by market opportunities made available through the World PEAS Food Hub.
- iv. Number of markets expanded: In the 2015 and 2016 season the World PEAS Food Hub expanded 6 markets.
- v. Number of new markets established: During the grant period we established 5 new markets.
- vi. Market sales decreased by \$2,372 and decreased by 2.7% between 2014 and 2016 due to increasing emphasis on expanding low-income food access partnerships and a declining retention rate in our standard CSA share numbers.
- vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 31
 - a. Percent Increase: 22% (increase from 24 beginning farmers benefitted prior to the project start)

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?

During the grant period the World PEAS Food Hub reached a variety of new populations through our food access programs. In 2015 our programs reached 1,810 low income and low access individuals, including senior citizens, children, homeless people, and other individuals. In 2016 our programs reached 2,316 individuals representing a 28% increase in people served. During the grant period we were able to greatly increase the number of senior citizens reached by expanding partnerships with 4 senior centers, and establishing new partnerships with an additional 2 senior centers. The number of senior citizens served increased by over 400. We increased food access for low income children by more than doubling the amount of produce delivered to 2 child daycare centers. Finally, by re-launching our SNAP CSA program, we diversified our audience beyond children and seniors to reach 10 new families in East Boston, Lowell, and Medford, MA.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

- i. Who are your community partners?

During the full grant period, the World PEAS Food Hub has partnered with 19 community organizations. Organizations in italics indicate current partnerships for this March to September reporting period.

- *Kit Clark Senior Center in Dorchester, MA*: Produce delivery for homebound senior citizens.
- *Medford Senior Center in Medford, MA*: Subsidized farmers market for senior citizens.
- *Somerville/Cambridge Elder Services, Somerville, MA*: Produce delivery for homebound senior citizens.
- *Springwell Senior Center, Waltham, MA*: Produce delivery for homebound senior citizens.
- *Arlington Council on Aging, Arlington, MA in partnership with the Lahey Clinic*: Free farmers market for senior citizens.

- *Burlington Council on Aging, Burlington, MA in partnership with the Lahey Clinic: Free farmers market for senior citizens.*
- *Peabody Council on Aging, Peabody, MA in partnership with the Lahey Clinic: Free farmers market for senior citizens.*
- *Cameron Senior Center, Westford, MA: Free farmers market for senior citizens.*
- *Community Teamwork, Inc. Phoenix Ave. Child and Family Services School Age Program, Lowell MA: Produce delivery for preparation in the kitchen to provide meals for low-income students.*
- *Community Teamwork, Inc. Phoenix Ave. Child and Family Services Day Care Program, Lowell MA: Bulk produce delivery for preparation in the kitchen to provide meals for low-income students at the Early Learning Center.*
- *Bridgewell's Pathfinder Homeless Shelter, Lowell, MA: Bulk produce distribution for participant staff to prepare meals for clients.*
- *Medford Housing Authority's Willis Ave. Medford, MA: CSA pick up site for families residing in a low-income housing complex. Program participants can pay using either their SNAP benefits or cash.*
- *Kroc Center, Dorchester, MA: Bulk produce delivered to be prepared by program participants and served in meals to clients.*
- *Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, Lowell, MA: Bulk produce donated to be distributed to program participants.*
- *Merrimack Valley Food Bank, Lowell, MA: Bulk produce to be distributed to program participants.*
- *Charlestown Kennedy Center in Charlestown, MA: SNAP CSA pick up site for low-income families paying for a farm share using their EBT card.*
- *East Boston YMCA, Boston, MA: SNAP CSA pick up site for low-income families paying for a farm share using their EBT card.*
- *Tufts University, Medford, MA: SNAP CSA pick up site for low-income families paying for a farm share using their EBT card.*
- *Mill No. 5, Lowell, MA: SNAP CSA pick up site for low-income families paying for a farm share using their EBT card.*

ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project?

Our partners have served as an essential entry point into the communities that the World PEAS Food Hub seeks to reach. By partnering with community organizations that are rooted in the communities where they are located, who know their clients well, and who are able to identify those most at risk for low food access, we have been able to reach the most vulnerable populations in our region. While New Entry does the important work of training beginning farmers and offering them access to land and infrastructure, and the World PEAS Food Hub provides the operations and logistical support to pack and deliver the produce, it is our community partners that distribute the fresh fruits and vegetables directly to their clients. We depend on our partners to connect us with under-served community members and to provide the support to distribute the produce to them. The staff at each of our partner organizations have contributed immensely to the success of our programs.

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

Over the grant period New Entry has built strong partnerships with the community organizations we work with. In 2017, we will continue to build and strengthen these partnerships to get more fresh food to more low-income and low food access individuals in our region. The staff at our partner organizations will remain key in assisting us to identify the most vulnerable community members, understand what

their unique needs are, and work to improve our programs to serve those people. Next year we will continue to deliver fresh food to 12 partner organizations, expanding at least 3 of those partnerships, and establish new partnerships with at least 3 new senior centers. Staff at our partner organizations will remain essential in improving access to fresh food in the community, contributing to the continued success of our food access programming.

5. Did you use contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project? N/A

6. Have you publicized any results yet?*

i. If yes, how did you publicize the results?

We have not published results from the 2016 season yet. We are currently putting together our 2016 Annual Report, which will be available on our website in early 2017. Our 2015 Annual Report, as well as our 2015 Food Access Overview, have been published and released at: <http://www.nesfp.org/world-peas-food-hub/world-peas-csa> .

ii. To whom did you publicize the results?

The 2015 Annual Report and 2015 Food Access Overview are available publically online via New Entry's website. The reports were also publicized via New Entry's monthly newsletter, the World PEAS CSA customer email list, our philanthropic partners and individual donors who support low-income food access, and directly sent to all community partner organizations. General activities and community partner relationships have been published on our organization's website. Reports can be found at: <http://nesfp.org/resources/2015-world-peas-food-hub-annual-report> and <http://nesfp.org/resources/2015-world-peas-food-access-overview>

iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach?

The 2015 Annual Report and 2015 Food Access Overview reached approximately 9,700 individuals via the New Entry Newsletter and an additional 12 individuals at community partner organizations, totaling 9,712. Per tracking via Google Analytics, there were also 112 unique page clicks on the 2015 Annual Report on the New Entry website, as well as 19 unique clicks on the 2015 Food Access Overview, totaling 9,843 people reached.

Please see attachments of publicity information generated during the grant period to promote our food access programming to low-income and low food access individuals, and offer information about our farmers, food, and operation.

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

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

In June, we conducted pre-season surveys with program participants at all of the senior centers we partner with, as well as with staff at the partner organizations. As this grant period ends, we are in the process of conducting post-season surveys with the same participants and staff members. Data was collected via an in-person paper or electronic survey.

ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?

Initial responses indicate that the programs were successful again this year. Respondents provided qualitative data demonstrating that the free farmers markets increased consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, leading to improved overall health and wellbeing. Initial analysis of quantitative data results also support increased produce consumption among participants, increased access to fresh produce, and increased knowledge about local produce and cooking fresh food at home. Feedback from staff at our partner organizations have also highlighted the social and emotional impacts that the farmers'

markets have on senior citizen participants. Their comments suggest that by providing a weekly space to gather, the farmers markets have helped to relieve social isolation and depression among elderly participants, and promoted cooperation, sharing, and community-building at the senior center.

8. Budget Summary:

- i. As part of the LFPP closeout procedures, you are required to submit the SF-425 (Final Federal Financial Report). Check here if you have completed the SF-425 and are submitting it with this report:
- ii. Did the project generate any income?
 - a. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award?

While the operations of the World PEAS Food Hub earned revenue during the grant period through the sale of locally grown produce, all revenues were paid back to farmers for the purchase of their produce and used to support deliveries and program operations. While revenues generated did not meet the operational expenses, they contributed to economic activity in the local food system, supporting the family incomes of farmers, and increased access of fresh produce in communities served.

9. Lessons Learned:

- i. Summarize any lessons learned. Draw from 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).

Through this project, we learned a great deal about partnership building. Over the course of the grant period we worked with 19 different organizations. By the end of the 2016 season we are working with 12 organizations. By initially developing and piloting several different strategies and programs for fresh produce distribution with our various partners, we have been able to identify the type of partnership and program that works best for our operation, for our community organization partners, and for their low-income and low-food access clients. Our most successful model has been the free farmers market offered at senior centers. The second most successful model is the farm share delivery for homebound senior citizens. This model is slightly more difficult to execute because it relies on the senior center utilizing their Meals On Wheels or other meal delivery infrastructure to deliver the produce, which can be a challenge. The third most successful partnership style is bulk delivery to an organization's kitchen. This type of partnership can be difficult to manage as kitchen managers and chef's oftentimes need advance notice of produce availability for menu planning which can pose a problem for our farmers. The support we have received through this grant funding has enabled us to develop this subsidized farmers' market program as an effective, efficient, and successful model for others to replicate. As for challenges, New Entry had four essential staff positions turn over during the grant period. Because partnership building is so essential to the success of our programs, we believe the staff transitions may have contributed to the slight decrease in revenue in 2016.

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

Overall, we achieved the goals we set out to meet during this project. We developed the capacity of our farmers to grow more fresh fruits and vegetables, we increased access to and consumption of fresh food for low-income and low access individuals by expanding our partnerships with 6 community organizations and established new partnerships with 5 organizations, and these activities contributed to increased incomes for our low-income farmers. While our overall revenue generated through the food access programming at the World PEAS Food Hub increased in the 2015 season, we saw a decrease in the 2016 season by \$2,372. With careful review, we have identified key areas where sales decreased, and strategies to address those. For example, between 2015 and 2016 we saw decreases in partners

purchasing produce directly for use in their kitchen, to prepare meals for clients. We saw an increase in partners purchasing produce to be distributed in a free farmers' market style distribution. Survey data shows that clients enjoy the experience of the farmers' market distribution, and it allows them to be in control of what produce they take. Conversations with partners who operate organizational kitchens highlighted some logistical bottlenecks around ordering and delivery time that we will address in 2017. We have identified the farmer's market style distribution to be our major area for growth.

- 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:

The most important lesson learned through this project has been the importance of establishing strong relationships with staff at partner organizations. As an organization that works to train farmers and offer marketing outlets by aggregating and distribution produce, our daily focus at the World PEAS Food Hub is on training farmers, and sourcing, packing, and delivering high-quality, fresh, locally grown food. The operations and logistical attention that must be paid to this process does not allow for our organization to also take on the distribution of the produce directly to the client. Simultaneously, the organizations we work with seek a partner that can provide access to high-quality, fresh, locally grown food delivered conveniently and consistently to their organization. Developing strong working relationships with partner organizations allows us each to excel at our individual and unique roles in improving access to fresh food for low-income and food insecure individuals.

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.

This project has helped New Entry build our food access program, define our role in the process of getting more fresh food to low-income and low food access individuals, and plan for expanding our partnerships to increase our impact. In 2017, the World PEAS Food Hub will expand our partnerships with 2 senior centers to increase participation in our free farmers' market program. Our goal is to increase the Burlington Council on Aging partnership from currently serving 50 senior citizens per week to serving 60 senior citizens per week in 2017. Additionally, we aim to increase participation at our partnership with the Cameron Senior Center in Westford, MA to extend the 10 week season to 16 weeks, providing fresh produce for an additional 360 senior citizens. We also plan to deliver \$5,000 worth of fresh produce directly to the kitchen at the Cameron Senior Center, which will reach at least 300 senior citizens during the 16 week season. In 2017, we will also establish new farmers' market partnership with 2 additional senior centers. Our goal is for one partnership to serve at least 50 senior citizens for the full 20 week season, with potential to reach another 500 senior citizens in the city of Boston. The second new partnership will be with the Lowell Senior Center in Lowell, MA reaching 225 senior citizens through 3 fresh produce distributions. We will also expand our SNAP CSA program, with the goal to reach 20 families in 2017. We anticipate that these new partnerships will increase sales by at least 20%, increasing incomes for our farmers and reaching an additional 1,435 people. We anticipate that these activities will allow New Entry to retain 3 full-time positions, 2 full-time seasonal positions, 1 part-time seasonal position, 1 AmeriCorps VISTA position, and 10 workshare volunteer positions.

- 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?

Please see above for an outline of planned activities for the World PEAS Food Hub 2017 season of food access programming.