

**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>	October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2016
Authorized Representative Name:	Jake Davis
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Authorized Representative Email:	rootcellarmo@gmail.com
Recipient Organization Name:	Root Cellar
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Expanding Local Food to Rural Missourians
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-LFPPX-MO-0103
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Columbia MO
Total Awarded Budget:	\$100,000

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).

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 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: Determine business specifics for Root Cellar expansion
 - a. Progress Made:
 1. The following business specifics were evaluated in several local communities:
 - a. Market Opportunity: An evaluation of currently available local food sources, traditional grocery markets and overall size and demographic of the current consumer population
 - b. Property: A search was completed to identify average cost per square foot of viable properties for lease, average cost of doing business including utilities etc.
 - c. Ease of Integration: We evaluated the ease of food distribution from farms currently in the Root Cellar network as well as potential new farmers/vendors near potential new markets.
 2. Jefferson City Missouri was identified as the first location for Root Cellar Expansion. An existing pilot project in the community lead Root Cellar to identify the underserved downtown area as the perfect target for market development.
 3. Based on market research and consumer interest Root Cellar identified Joplin Missouri and the Lake of the Ozarks area for additional market expansion points
 - b. Impact on Community: The market research done during this phase of the project solidified the need for more local food access in communities under 50,000 people. Communities of this size are eager to increase access to healthy food options. However, during the research phase it was also evident that more education related to cooking and eating locally available food products is needed. Additionally, it is clear that lower household incomes do impact the available food dollars that can be spent on locally produced items.
 - ii. Goal/Objective 2: Increase access to local food by expanding Root Cellar locations
 - a. Progress Made:
 1. Root Cellar is proud to have expanded the access of local food to the City of Jefferson. In May 2015 a 1700 sqft market was opened in the heart of the community. The market provides a wide variety of consumer’s access to local food. Root Cellar Jefferson City is:
 - a. In the heart of the downtown business district
 - b. Includes cold, frozen and dry storage for storage for product and weekly subscription distribution
 - c. Includes retail space for frozen meat, fruits, vegetables, dry good and more.
 - d. Utilizes new local vendors and farmers from Root Cellar vast local food network to stock products from around the state.
 2. Root Cellar also expanded to the communities of Joplin Missouri and the Osage Beach Missouri area with seasonal markets offering weekly subscriptions as well as retail purchases with limited hours. Root Cellar

anticipates the markets growing in these communities rapidly and will expand hours as the brand and demand for locally produced food grows.

- a. The markets operate on a very small foot print approximately 800 sqft.
- b. Includes cold, frozen and dry storage for storage for product and weekly subscription distribution
- c. Includes retail space for frozen meat, fruits, vegetables, dry good and more.
- d. Offers 3 day a week service to subscribers as well as a wide variety of retail shoppers

b. Impact on Community: The markets are providing a boost to the local economy by creating 6 new part time jobs that equal 2.5 FTE. In addition sales revenue is generating a contribution to sales tax. However, the most powerful impact is access to high quality, healthy local food items. This market expansion has also created an additional outlet for existing Root Cellar farmers while adding 14 new vendors.

iii. Goal/Objective 3: Include more local farmers to expand the Root Cellar farmer network

a. Progress Made: Root Cellar has added 14 new vendors. In addition 5 farmers in the Root Cellar network have increased production capacity of core products like Leafy Greens, Tomatoes and Berries. This includes the construction of a new hydroponic production facility and four new high tunnels on these farms.

1. GAP Certification Assistance: Root Cellar is currently exploring the group certification for GAP. After the release of the Group GAP handbook Root Cellar has launched a plan to develop a Root Cellar Network Group GAP certification complete with technical assistance, workbooks and internal auditing. A program plan is currently being developed.

b. Impact on Community: These additional relationships are resulting in increased capital improvements on small farms and increased revenue for farmers new to the Root Cellar network. Accessing new markets has resulted in approximately \$20,000 monthly in increased farm revenue.

iv. Goal/Objective 4: Make a larger diversity of local products available to all customers

a. Progress Made: Due to the expanded capacity of farms within the Root Cellar network many new products are becoming available. One such product that was not available on the market a few years ago is locally produced ginger. This is an example of steady market access increase crop viability on a farm.

1. Farmers/Vendors have new delivery points much closer to their farm.
2. Root Cellar facilitates in house distribution between all Root Cellar locations to create additional market sources for products.
3. Being present in new communities is one of the best ways to identify the local farmer/vendor. Consumers often have a strong sense of the best producers in their community and relationship often come from consumer recommendations. By having multiple locations those products are then distributed much further into the local economy than once possible.

b. Impact on Community: This expansion of products has resulted in a better consumer experience and increased local farm revenue due to product additions. Consumers now have access to a full service retail location focused on

locally produced food. This provides a significant increase in the overall number of products an individual can purchase from local farmers. It also increase the overall convenience for making these purchases by presenting flexible hours and knowledge staff.

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, 20__). Include further explanation if necessary.
 - i. Number of direct jobs created: 2.5FTE distributed among 6 part time employees
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: 4FTE among 8 part time employees
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: 7 part time farm labor jobs were created due to expansion of farms in the network.
 - iv. Number of markets expanded:
 - v. Number of new markets established: 1 full service retail market (open year round) and 2 seasonal markets spread throughout the state of Missouri.
 - vi. Market sales increased by \$400,000 and increased by 40%.
 - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 35
 - a. Percent Increase: 5% to 30% increase depending on farm
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. Missouri State Capitol- By locating the Jefferson City market within walking distance of nearly 25,000 State of Missouri Employees and 3,500 residence who had little to no walking access to local food options Root Cellar has expanded the reach and awareness of locally available food products.
 - ii. Rural Communities- Root Cellar has expanded local food to 3 communities that meet the standard of rural, fewer than 50,000 residents. These communities are often over looked and underserved by conventional retail food stores. They also have strong desire to increase access to healthy locally produced food items.
4. Discuss your community partnerships.
 - i. Who are your community partners? Root Cellar has formed a close working relationship with many organization to help make this project a success. The largest examples include
 - a. The Downtown Jefferson City Association assisted on many levels during the business development phase and continues to partner on marketing efforts related to local food.
 - b. Lincoln University relocated their weekly farmers market every Saturday in May to the street in front of Root Cellar's market to promote local farmers and business in the local food industry.
 - c. The Missouri River Bluffs Association has worked to connect Root Cellar with new farmers/vendors in market communities.
 - d. Missouri Audubon Society is currently working with Root Cellar to begin marketing locally produced bird friendly beef in Root Cellar retail markets.
 - e. Missouri Rural Crisis Center has assisted Root Cellar in developing strategic relationship in new market areas.

- f. Community governments have been instrumental in assisting with business development.
 - g. Healthy organizations like Capitol Region Medical Center and other have been critical to sharing information about the availability of locally produced food in new market areas as well as offering incentive for those who struggle with health issues to buy local fruits and vegetables.
 - ii. How have they contributed to the results you've already achieved? These groups have provided much needed insight into their communities. This has facilitated a great introduction to the community and helped spread the word to a wide variety of customers.
 - iii. How will they contribute to future results? The partners listed will continue to spread the word about new products and markets in the target communities. They provide a strong community access point in areas where the Root Cellar brand is still developing.
5. did you use contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project?
NO
6. Have you publicized any results yet?*
No Results have been publicized. Root Cellar has focused on publicizing the opening of new markets. A case study will be written and shared within the local food community in hopes that the model can be replicated in the near future.
 - i. If yes, how did you publicize the results?
 - ii. To whom did you publicize the results?
 - iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach?
 *Send any publicity information (brochures, announcements, newsletters, etc.) electronically along with this report. Non-electronic promotional items should be digitally photographed and emailed with this report (do not send the actual item).
7. Have you collected any feedback from your community and additional stakeholders about your work?
Preliminary feedback from customers and community stakeholders has been received.
 - i. If so, how did you collect the information? Data has been collected via multiple collection methods.
 - a. Root Cellar Subscriber Surveys: At the end of each subscription season Root Cellar surveys participants about quality, quantity, access location and a variety of other factors related to their experience.
 - b. Root Cellar has also conducted a series of Farmer Meetings to reach new farmer/vendors as well as share information and gather feedback about distribution, delivery and other supply chain logistics.
 - c. Root Cellar staff has collected key customer comments during the project phase at new market access points to ensure the experience is optimal.
 - ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?
 - a. Community Leaders: Root Cellar has heard frequently from community leaders who are excited for a new business offering healthy local food. These leaders often share frustration about the overall health of those in their community and the lack of access to foods that might improve that health.
 - b. Consumers: Root Cellar has identified some key customer response categories

1. Surprise at the overall number of products available from farmers/vendors in the state of Missouri. Many had very little idea they could purchase such a wide range of good locally.
2. Excitement at the quality of products produced locally including freshness, taste and health benefits.
3. Adjustment to seasonal eating. Many customers are surprised at the abundance and low cost of items in one season (example Tomatoes in July) and the overall price change to that product as the season fade (much higher December tomatoes produced in greenhouses).
4. Appreciation of a small business locating in their community.

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? No
 - a. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award?

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).
 - a. Develop strong relationships with community leaders – Root Cellar was fortunate to build strong relationships with influential members of new market communities. This facilitates many aspects of a project including identification of the most impactful marketing channels, business development partners (landlords, contractors, employees, etc) and provide consumer confidence.
 - b. Be flexible with equipment and set up – Not every new marketing, or building can be developed exactly the same (particularly when working in historic downtown building etc). Identifying the best tools for each situation is critical to sticking within a budget.
 - c. Brand awareness and consumer demand build slowly – It is critical to recognized that expanding into new communities takes considerable brand marketing dollars as well as education about local food, cooking and seasonal eating. The availability of locally produced items helps facilitate growth but time is critical to assist in the adjustment of consumer behaviors. That is why Root Cellar chose to phase in markets in new communities with pilot programs and seasonal markets.
- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:
 - a. Root Cellar achieved the original goals of the project but did encounter delays and timeline adjustments. Setting realistic expectations will help others with similar projects.
- 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:
 - a. The Root Cellar team learned that the development of strong relationships in the communities for expansion took far longer than initially anticipated. The

project took more time to get off the ground than hoped due to understanding the business logistics in each new community. This process is not particularly costly from a funding stand point but does present challenges in a time sensitive project window.

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.
 - a. Root Cellar plans to be present in the communities we serve for many years to come. We have only begun to scratch the surface of marketing potential and partnerships in these areas. Below is a short list of future activities already in the works.
 1. Cooking classes demonstrating local season foods (some partnership for low income communities have already been secured)
 2. Better distribution routes for farmers/vendors between Root Cellar locations
 3. Development of GAP group plan for farmers in the Root Cellar network
 4. Expanded local food offerings to include "ready to eat" food items.
 5. Participation in community initiatives like Local Food Local Places and others
 6. Sales growth at or above 10% per year
 7. Continued expansion of part time employment
- ii. Do you have any recommendations for future activities and, if applicable, an outline of next steps or additional research that might advance the project goals?
 - a. Root Cellar is focused on building a better food system in the state of Missouri and we continue to engage at all levels. We do not have a specific outline of future expansion but plan on aggressive growth over the next several years.