

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>	September 30, 2015-June 30, 2018
Authorized Representative Name:	Yausmenda Freeman
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Recipient Organization Name:	On the Ranch Alliance
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Expanding Access to Natural and Organic Foods in Clark County, NV
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	15-LFPP-NV-0113
Year Grant was Awarded:	2015
Project City/State:	North Las Vegas, Nevada
Total Awarded Budget:	\$92,160

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: To train On the Ranch Alliance Food Hub management in effectively operating a food hub.**

a. Progress Made: In 2016, the director and assistant director received their Food Hub Management certificates from the University of Vermont. They went through an extensive 10-month training program that studied working models of food hubs in the northeast United States, and made acquaintances with cohorts in the same industry preparing to open their own food hubs or already operating food hubs in their respective regions. During this time, On the Ranch Alliance’s team used their course’s project to create the business plan for their food hub to be opened in Clark County, NV. In August 2017, ORA subleased a kitchen to operate their full-service commissary. This commissary was their form of food hub. Although fully permitted with hub members ready to rent and ready to operate by February 2018, circumstances beyond their control prevented them from opening their doors to the public.

b. Impact on Community:

Knowledge attained during this training is being used to educate local youth.

ii. **Goal/Objective 2: To grow the food hub’s supplier network to 40 vendors by September 2017, and begin accumulating buyers and consumers.**

a. Progress Made: We met with local producers from Nevada and Utah at a food hub workshop in St. George, Utah where we discussed the need for our services as a food hub. There were going to be 3 food hubs established to help move the local produce through our region. We were the food hub to be created in Southern Nevada. The producers in Southern Nevada expressed their need for extensive assistance with marketing and wanted help with marketing their individual farms to end users. Assistance was also needed in grading and sorting produce. This program was not designed to provide a food hub to facilitate that immediately. We were going to pull all their brands together to help distribute to local buyers. Due to this, the type of food hub we provided changed from produce distribution to a commissary kitchen. Our commissary was still going to assist local growers with outreach to the local mobile food vendors to supply produce on their pantry lists.

We were not successful with our projected goal of growth of vendors. We had seven initial food hub members awaiting our opening. Our Tier 3 commissary was permitted to open on February 21, 2018 and we were unlawfully locked out of our commissary by the landlord, which has resulted in us filing a district court case. Once we renovated the kitchen, the landlord found value in it and tried to capitalize off our hard work, including the program’s equipment. If we had been able to open our doors, we projected our time slots would have been completely booked within 6 months. Our members had to register with another commissary.

b. Impact on Community:

Information gained through the experience of attempting to implement this project in our community will allow us to return to it at another time, and in the meantime, share the information with others interested in implementing similar concepts here locally.

iii. **Goal/Objective 3: To provide outreach and education on local food production to buyers and consumers.**

a. Progress Made: Our partnership with Create A Change Now allowed us to connect local growers of produce with local chefs and end users and farmers markets. We used the farmers market as an outreach platform to raise awareness amongst the community that produce could be grown in the desert. Through Create a Change Now, we served as distributors for the local produce grown by elementary school children at their on-site gardens. This produce reached local chefs and the end user at the farmers market. We also distributed seeds to farmers market customers along with educational information that detailed growing zones and the time of year different produce grows in our climates. We spoke with local chefs about connecting them with local growers, including Create a Change Now, to provide local produce and meats to meet their weekly pantry list needs.

b. Impact on Community: Due to us living in the desert, most consumers and buyers were unaware that local produce existed. They didn't know that we could grow anything sustainable in the desert. We educated them on some of the local producers that were successfully doing so, and showed them how larger corporations and small restaurants were successfully marketing "locally grown" to enhance their appeal to the end consumers at their restaurants and in large chain grocery stores in town.

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: 3
- ii. Number of jobs retained: 0
- iii. Number of indirect jobs created: 0
- iv. Number of markets expanded: 0
- v. Number of new markets established: 0
- vi. Market sales increased by \$10 and increased by 0%.
- vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 2
 - a. Percent Increase: 0

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?

Through our outreach efforts at the farmers market, we were able to expand our customer base of chefs and local food vendors whom we were going to do business with as their registered kitchen. We had vendors from various ethnic groups: African-American, Hawaiian, Jamaican, Guam, Native American. As local required by health regulations, all local food vendors with annual itinerants have to be registered with a commissary. The chefs and vendors we reached were in need of cooking and food prep space, along with space to park their trucks and trailers. They were awaiting the opening of our commissary kitchen; some booking 5-days a week to cook and prep.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.
 - i. Who are your community partners? On the Ranch Farmers Market, Create a Change Now, Youth Outdoor Unity
 - ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project? We used the farmers market as an outreach venue to speak with consumers, recruit member for the commissary, and distribute information. Through our presence there, we were able to evaluate the need for our services. We were also able to educate local chefs and caterers on their requirements of using a commissary instead of cooking out of their personal home kitchens. Create a Change Now allowed us to meet the local farmers who assist our children growing their produce. We were able to give them tips on sorting and grading for distribution when we picked up their harvest during the children's off-season. Youth Outdoor Unity was a resource that we were using to connect us to contracting with the Las Vegas Convention Center for vendors that needed cooking and prep space to service events held there.
 - iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this LFPP grant? We have partnered with Youth Outdoor Unity to provide an agricultural component to their children's S.T.E.A.M. to use components of this program in the future. The knowledge and experience attained through the Food Hub Management Certification program will be used to assist in educating the children of Youth Outdoor Unity.

5. Did you use contractors to conduct the work? No. If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project?

6. Have you publicized any results yet? * We did not publicize any results.
 - 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?
 - i. If so, how did you collect the information?
 - ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?
 "Can you please find a new spot and open your kitchen? I'm waiting for you to open so I can sell my food truck." ~Jamaican Sun
 "You are one of very few Tier 3, full-service commissaries." ~Southern Nevada Health District
 "We really need your services. Are you going to find a new location? Can you refer me to another one in the meantime?" ~Hawaiian Brain Freeze

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?

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). We developed our LFPP project off our original knowledge of what we knew a food hub to be. It wasn't until we went through our certification process and visited several different formats of a food hub in the northeast of the country and met with other cohorts, did we realize that we could shape our food hub to fit the needs of our community. Attending the University of Vermont for the certification program was the best use of resources for our program. Sitting in the workshop in Utah with our local producers was the best gauge for hearing the needs of our potential suppliers, which ultimately prevented us from trying to provide a service that our suppliers weren't ready for. There were several steps that needed to be taken before we could implement the type of food hub we had initially envisioned. By visiting various formats of food hubs, and seeing their operations, learning how they were structured and the resources used to start and maintain them, we were able to better assess struggles we would encounter before moving forward and thwart those pitfalls. One of our instructors in our certification program was the founder of a very successful food hub that implemented our original format. Speaking with him, reading his journals, watching his videos, we knew immediately after meeting with our regional farmers, that there were several phases needed to help bring value to our project, but we would have to provide individualized services for our local producers. We also had to be realistic in determining if they were ready and willing to be receptive to the assistance they voiced they needed. Through this assessment, we learned how to effectively use our group's dynamic in drafting our future projects that support our local and regional small producers.
- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:
When we spoke with local growers about establishing a food hub that was a distribution format, many of the growers wanted the food hub to be established by the growers themselves. They wanted to have more control and decision-making power than what they would have if a separate entity like us was responsible for it. The growers voiced the concern about buyers disregarding a food hub to continue to use larger distributors that provide full-service offering of more than just produce. It was these major concerns that prompted us to select a more readily welcomed and supported food hub format that all mobile food vendors were required to have. The demand was high, and the supply was low for commissary kitchens in Clark County.
- 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:
With a project like this, it is best not to have shared space like we did. Lease a stand-alone kitchen. We made the mistake of leasing the unused kitchen of a facility with shared access to restrooms, and it was our major downfall. Visiting other projects and speaking with their facilitators was the best way to understand the magnitude of type of project we set out to implement. Attending local events with our potential suppliers prior to planning and implementation helped shape the administration of our project. It helped us understand our suppliers and vendors needs and our limitations. Connecting

with forum of other food hub administrators worldwide keeps us in the know on the progression of our industry and is an invaluable tool for bouncing ideas off each other, problem solving, and sharing resources and information.

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 are going to use our gained experience and certification to assist with exposing children to the field of agriculture and the components of food hubs. We will be collaborating with another local nonprofit organization to assist with their S.T.E.A.M. program.
- 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?
Organize a research project that updates information about the needs of our local/regional producers in an effort to provide training in marketing, grading, sorting, logistics, and branding that could help the producers create a producer-operated food hub for the region.