

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 LFPP staff 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, 2015
Authorized Representative Name:	Jeanne M. Darling
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Recipient Organization Name:	Cornell Cooperative Extension of Delaware County
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	DELAWARE FRESH
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-LFPPX-NY-0129
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Hamden, New York
Total Awarded Budget:	\$25,000

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.

This Grant supports “Activities will include identifying consumer base, farmer and food organizations membership, potential central distribution sites; online and website presence for food distribution methods for ordering, payment, and pick up; calendar of seasonal, year round and specialty foods; regional branding and marketing; and employment. In short, Extension, its partners, and farmer and food producers seek to develop an online marketing, ordering and centralized distribution delivery system to the consumers’ dinner plate, without overlap of costs to farmers and food producers for distributions, services, trainings, and marketing.” (#8 Executive Summary, page 2 of application). Changes that reflect outcomes from this Grant are highlighted in **bold black color**.

i. Goal/Objective 1: Market Research Part 1 MAPPING NEEDS for both Farmer/Food Producer and Consumer – Activities to date, Progress made and Impact on Community:

October – December 2014 Cornell Cooperative Extension of Delaware County staff met with Consultant Maureen Blanchard, Director of Schoharie Fresh, and Dr. Jason Evans, SUNY Cobleskill, and toured the Schoharie Fresh facility. Staff learned about the challenges, operation, and successes of Schoharie Fresh. November 13, 2014 was selected as the Farmers’ & Food Producers’ Planning Meeting #1, with Ms. Blanchard as guest presenter, and at which 36 Farmers attended, of whom 27 responded to a survey. This survey documents their current farm operation, with 23 interest in participating in an online and retail local foods outlet as another venue to serve consumers: comments ranged from “maybe” interest to “I don’t have internet”, “being able to only pick what will/is sold would be greatly advantageous” and this is a ‘future endeavor”. Other survey data show seven selling in two venues and six selling in three or more venues (including Lucky Dog’s Food Hub between Hamden and New York City), and 13 indicated an interest for a year round market for their year-round available foods.

January-April 2015 DELAWARE FRESH Consumer Surveys were distributed, using Qualtrics Software via a link of Extension’s website Home Page and 33 emails to stakeholders (CADE, FARM CATSKILLS, Delaware County Economic Development, Delaware County Public Health) and county agencies’ contacts for internal distributions. Several county agencies stated uncomfotability with such distribution because their distribution might be perceived as promotion; the solution was a multi-paneled display on DELAWARE FRESH with Consumer Surveys to be filled in by the public entering the Delaware County Building, Delhi, NY (March), and several senior clubs. Manual distribution of DELAWARE FRESH Consumer Surveys was done at multiple sites, such as the Extension’s Board Meeting, Head Start parents group and one Elementary School Student/Parent/Staff cooking program, Senior Meals Sites, Food Pantries, WIC, Extension sponsored Ag, Climate Change, and Complete Streets conferences. These 334 responses were tallied into the Qualtrics software and indicated high consumer interest for a local foods retail outlet.

May-September 2015 DELAWARE FRESH was promoted at other Extension events, with a display and Consumer Surveys to be filled in manually; events include Extension’s County Board of Supervisors’ annual picnic at the 4-H Camp Shankitunk (July, 12 responses); Delaware County Fair (August; 60 survey responses), a worksite Healthy/Safety Fair (May, 25 responses), one town’s business network (May, 22 responses), and one Hospital (May; 20 survey responses). The new total is 452 surveys. Highlights of these responses: low income or limited resource residents represents 10%+/-, with 56% ages 31-60

and 30% 60+; 25% male vs. 75% female responders; 53% without children 0-18 years old; while 100% use supermarkets, 57% use Farmers Markets, 49% farmstand, and 43% "I grow my own"; and 60% use Facebook, 63% use Internet, 77% newspapers, with Penny/County Shopper and radio usage at 55%. Total responses for interest to shop online for local foods with pick up at a central location vs. a satellite location are: 159 (36%) to 67 (20%) responses (see attached Qualtrics tallied responses to "Your Food Attitude"). The Qualtrics data indicate that a direct farmer-to-consumer local foods retail outlet is not a saturated market due to strong consumer commitment to purchasing locally available farm products in as many possible alternate venues.

ii. Goal/Objective 2: Business Development Study Farmers & Food Producers' Needs -- Activities to date, Progress made and Impact on Community:

October – December 2014 From the November 13, 2014 Planning Meeting, farmers showed interest in participating in an online and retail local foods outlet as another venue to serve consumers, with seven selling in two venues and six selling in three or more venues (including Lucky Dog's Food Hub between Hamden and New York City), and in conversation indicated an interest for a year round market.

January – April 2015: Time and activities focused on DELAWARE FRESH Consumer Survey distribution. However, as noted in the Revised Interim Report of August 10, 2015, while farmers are reluctant to share specific details about their farm operation, further conversations with them and Extension Ag staff indicate the following concerns: financial challenges to enter a new market venue such as a local foods retail outlet; a 20% commission on all sales (with such moneys to be plowed back into the new market venue for overhead, staffing and marketing costs); insurance coverage if they are new vendors or established vendors adding new products and/or selling processed as well as raw foods; food labeling requirements compliance. While financial institutions consider Farming/Agriculture a risky investment, farmers also struggle in forecasting profits, sales, and optimal markets for consumer purchases to prove their farm operation being credit worthy, and eligible for county and regional Micro-Enterprise dollars and loans.

May - September 2015: Conversations with Consultant, farmers, stakeholders, and Extension Ag staff indicate farmers' usage of social media for marketing their farm products (i.e., "TELL YOUR STORY") is infrequent or random, that they may not be confident in planning a social media marketing calendar strategy, and are uncomfortable using same due to time constraints. **A Farmers' Planning Meeting #2, with Consultant Blanchard, took place on September 9, 2015, along with new and added Consultant Russell A. Burnham¹, on Social Media Marketing strategies to attract and capture greater sales in a local foods retail outlet, and to develop and implement a weekly calendar for Facebook, website, and InstaGram postings.** All Farmers who attended the November 13th meeting were emailed and telephoned an invitation to register; while 12 said 'yes', five attended with their laptops, along with Watershed Ag Council's Pure Catskills Farm to Market Manager, Kristan Morley. The five responses on the Pre/Post Workshop evaluation indicates a 50% gained confidence to use social media to promote their farm business. (A copy of the evaluation is attached, along with Press Release #1 and Flyer). Delaware County Chamber of Commerce sponsored this event held at their Conference Room (because of Internet capacity) at their eCenter, Delhi, NY.

¹ Approval to add Consultant Russell A. Burnham to this Grant came via email and phone conversation with Ms. Kim Harmon, on behalf of N. Nelson, date: 7/17/15. His fee does not change this Grant's requested and approved budget of \$25,000.

The power point presentations by Consultants Blanchard and Burnham have been saved to be posted on Extension’s website, and Facebook sites for Human Ecology and Ag, along with the to-be-edited video of their presentations; their utility to farmers for marketing and publicity planning extend beyond the life of this Grant.

Also a second Farmers’ Survey was developed, which requires more thoughtful responses about farm operations, costs vs. profits ratio, and time needed when juggling multiple farm tasks with equal priority vs. time needed to plan and implement marketing. This has been shared with farmers via Extension’s email list serve using Qualtrics software on Extension’s Human Ecology Facebook site post date August 13, 2015, and manually at the Delaware County Fair; because summer is the busiest season, only two manual responses have been received. **The Qualtrics survey response deadline has been moved to December 2015, as this is a useful tool that can continue to extend this Grant’s feasibility study.**

iii. Goal/Objective 3: Business Development Study Sustainability & Funding Opportunities -- Activities to date, Progress made and Impact on Community:

Extension staff continues to identify and research grant opportunities as they are posted, such as: NE SARE Partnership Grant – to be submitted; USDA Farmers’ Market SNAP Support Grant—submitted; EPA Local Foods, Local Places—not submitted. The USDA Farmers’ Market SNAP Support Grant, if awarded, enables Delaware County Farmers at the County’s nine Markets to sell to Food Stamps consumers, who were under-surveyed with the DELWARE FRESH Consumer Survey .

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: n/a
- ii. Number of jobs retained: 1-T. Gilmore-Barnes, Program Educator, .5FTE
- iii. Number of indirect jobs created: not applicable
- iv. Number of markets expanded: not applicable
- v. Number of new markets established: no new markets, **yet six Farm were presented at the Delaware County Fair who supplied raw produce and gave out cooked veal samples to Fair attendees as part of Extension’s Human Ecology nutrition program: Recipes and taste samplings were shared with the public to a) promote the local farmers; b) encourage attendees to purchase such farm foods and replicate the recipes at home; and c) educate attendees about the simplicity of such recipes towards healthy lifestyles.**
- vi. Market sales increased by \$insert dollars and increased by insert percentage%; not applicable.
- vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 36 who attended the Farmers’ Planning Meeting #1 (November 13, 2014) and 5 who attended the Farmers’ Planning Meeting #2 (September 9, 2015).
 - a. Percent Increase: 100%

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?

450+ DELAWARE FRESH Consumer Surveys were distributed both electronically and manually; observation with manual distribution indicates approximately 430 White, 15 Hispanic/Latino, and 5 Black/African-American, with 32 or 7% using Farmers Market Nutrition Program Coupons and 46 or 10% using SNAP EBT cards. This Consumer Survey was translated into Spanish for distribution in Hancock, Margaretville and the Margaretville Hospital, along with distribution at the Delaware County Building (Delhi-county seat) and the Delaware County Fair (Walton). Manual distribution took place at sites

listed in #1 above, and with specific efforts to survey SNAP and Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program users: two Food Pantries, one Head Start Parents' Group, three Senior Meals Sites, three Senior Clubs, and three WIC sites.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

i. Who are your community partners? Consultant Maureen Blanchard, Director of Schoharie Fresh, and **Consultant Russell A. Burnham**, social media marketing; Partners Rebecca Morgan, Director Center for Agricultural Development & Entrepreneurship (CADE); Kristan Morley, Farm to Market Manager, Pure Catskills/Watershed Ag Council; Sonia Janiszewski, Director, Farm Catskills; Mary Beth Silano, Director, Delaware County Chamber of Commerce; Glenn Nealis, Director, Delaware County Department of Economic Development; and Bonnie Hamilton, Director, Delaware County Public Health.

ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project? Delaware County Chamber of Commerce sponsored the Farmers' Planning Meeting #2 because of internet accessibility in their conference room for county partners, i.e., Extension; Pure Catskills/Watershed Ag Council Farm to Market Manager provided insight to how infrequently farmers use social media to market their farm operation and to expand sales/profits. CADE, Farm Catskills, Economic Development, and Public Health, and the above stakeholders, shared internally among their staffs the Qualtrics Software link for the DELAWARE FRESH Consumer Survey and were involved in the May 2014 (pre USDA-LFPP grant submission and award) for a direct farmer-to-consumer venue needs assessment meeting.

iii. It is anticipated that these critical partners/stakeholders will continue to provide assistance, guidance, input and support as Extension seeks funding to strengthen direct farmer-to-consumer venues—they are being asked to provide Letters of Support for Extension's NE SARE Partnership Grant application to provide Delaware County farmers with social media marketing training and resources in 2016.

5. Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project?

Consultant Blanchard provided input on two Farmers' Surveys and one Consumer Survey, presented an overview of Schoharie Fresh operation and social media marketing impact on increasing farmers' sales, profits and exposure to potential consumers in Extension's two Farmers' Planning meetings; **Consultant Burnham detailed the key components needed for successful impact of using website and Facebook sites to attract consumers, gain recognition, and influence sales and profits in the second Farmers' Planning meeting. Both provided power point presentations that will be posted on Extension's website and Facebook sites, thus extending this Grant's lifespan and promoting the NE SARE activities (if funded) of the social media marketing training and resources.**

6. Have you publicized any results yet;

i. If yes, how did you publicize the results²? Results from the Delaware County Consumer Surveys were shared with Partners and Stakeholders, from the Farmers' Survey #1 with the public and Extension members via *Extension Connection January 2015* issue a summary of the findings and surveys from this report, along with the links to the power point presentations will be prepared for *Extension Connection*.

²See the list at the end of this report for attachments, such as publicity information (brochures, announcements, newsletters, etc.) electronically along with this report.

ii. To whom did you publicize the results? *Extension Connection* is sent to 860 Extension members as well as 10+ staffs of county human services agencies and our Stakeholders, 13 libraries, four hospitals, 13 schools, and the 13 County Supervisors and Chairman of the Board of Supervisors. Our Partners and Stakeholders will also receive a copy of this Final Report.

iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? Potentially 1,000 individuals, and actually 500 individuals (452 survey respondents-general public, 36 farmers and food producers (two Farmers’ Planning Meetings), Qualtrics electronic link to survey recipients, and Extension’s six stakeholders/partners in this Grant.

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

i. If so, how did you collect the information? Using both Consumer Survey (done via Qualtrics electronic and manual collections) and Farmers’ Surveys 1 (from November 13, 2014 Planning Meeting) and 2, and **one Workshop Evaluation (from September 9, 2015 meeting)** which were manual submissions.

ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)? See attached list of Consumer Survey Question 12 responses, along with summarized comments from Farmers in answers to **1i above**.

8. Budget Summary: All of the \$25,000 budget was spent by September 30, 2015, with \$ 10,621.48 as Matching Funds/In-Kind contribution. The table below summarizes the amounts spent for this final quarter, and for the year; approval to add a second consultant (contractual) was provided both by email and phone call by LFPP staff on July 17, 2015:

	July-September 2015	October 2014-September 2015
Personnel:	\$ 4,946.68	\$ 18,137.68
Contractual	\$ 659.22	\$ 859.22
Equipment Purchases:	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Travel:	\$ 917.74	\$ 2,723.79
Supplies:	\$ 231.35	\$ 1,007.31
Other:	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Indirect Costs:	\$ 587.97	\$ 2,272.00
TOTAL:	\$ 7,342.96	\$ 25,000.00

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. 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):

Of the 452 Consumer Survey responses, 60% use Facebook, 77% use newspapers, and 63% use internet to find out what is happening in Delaware County. While selling their farm products through one or

several of Delaware County's nine Farmers' Markets provides direct farmer-to-consumer sales and conversations, and while advertising as members in the annual Pure Catskills *Guide for Farm Fresh Products* (Watershed Ag Council publication), farmers know the importance of being accessible by email, website and/or Facebook. One lesson learned from this Grant as Feasibility Study is that, through farming demands and time commitments, farmers struggle with updating and maintaining a strong, consistent social media marketing plan to reach current and potential consumers, and to maintain a presence in order to increase sales and profits.

Of the 452 Consumer Survey responses, half respondents have children ≤ 18 years old, yet 78 respondents indicate they use either Farmers Markets Nutrition Program Coupons and/or SNAP EBT. This low number reflects that part time staff budget constraints within this Grant's budget limited travel to the southern communities of Delaware County where these populations live. But it also reveals the importance of getting funding to support SNAP transactions for farmers at each of the County's nine Farmers' Markets --- a USDA FMSSP grant application was submitted in June to address this critical gap of direct farmer-to-consumer sales.

Delaware County is approximately the size of Rhode Island, therefore consumers' purchases of locally fresh farm products is usually done via one of the County's nine Farmers' Markets. Of the 452 Consumer Survey responses, 258 individuals or 57% respondents indicate they shop at Farmers' Markets and 219 or 49% shop at farmstands. In response to Question 12 (Your Food Shopping Attitude), 159 or 36% indicate they would travel to a site centrally located in Delaware County to pick up my online food order, and 87 or 20% would prefer to travel to a satellite site located along Delaware County borders to pick up my online food order.

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

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:

Farmers are very proud of their business and enjoy meeting their consumers face to face. However, farming is a time consuming operation, so they find it difficult to set aside time and commitment to learn and implement social media marketing, coupled with the invisibility of their current and potential customers through internet technology. A second challenge is obtaining their input about farming, their needs/concerns and questions in writing. Any future project should be implement with more in-the-field video taping and recording (which has been done through many of USDA's other funded projects), but this approach requires more staff dollars for in-the-field time and travel.

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) The two power point presentations by Consultants Blanchard and Burnham provide comprehensive information for farmers to "TELL YOUR STORY" using social media marketing; these will be posted to the Extension's website and Facebook sites as resources to be accessed at any time.

Several of the farmers attending the September 9th meeting requested contact information from Russell Burnham for future follow up.

B) Extension, with its Stakeholders Pure Catskills/Watershed Ag Council, CADE, and Farm Catskills, will continue to address ways to equip, enable, and strengthen Delaware County 704 farmers' usage of social media marketing and understanding of how social media analytics data can drive market outreach and sales/profits. Extension is submitting a Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Partnership Gant that focuses on these two prong issues. Extension asking this USDA LFPP stakeholders to partner on the NE SARE application, along with asking the Delaware County Electric Cooperative and Margaretville Telephone Company to be partners because of their broadband technology and high speed internet access vision to cover and serve Delaware County residents, businesses, and farmers. Farmers will be needs assessment surveyed, and then Extension, with Consultant Russell A. Burnham, and Extension staff to video tape and photograph (in-the-field) farmers' products and "TELL YOUR STORY" will assist interested farmers to set up their website, Facebook account, and a social media marketing calendar of regular postings. It is anticipated that at least two social media marketing training workshops with resources will be held: farmers will bring their laptops to launch their website and Facebook sites at these workshops.

C) Extension awaits word if its USDA FMSSP grant application has been awarded. If awarded, this Grant will enable Extension staff to connect Delaware County farmers who sell through one or several of the County's nine Farmers' Markets to sell directly to SNAP EBT and Farmer Market Nutrition Coupon Program users for the first time. None of the County's Farmers' Markets sponsor SNAP EBT transactions, and several farmers at several Markets accept FMNP Coupons.

D) Extension's Farmers' (Qualtrics) Survey #2 will continue to be open for Farmers' responses through year end as a tool for Extension's Ag staff to continue to identify farmers' challenges, concerns, and needs.

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? See **10iA responses above.**

As part of Cornell Cooperative Extension's ongoing activities and vision to serve Delaware County, NY farmers, future activities to promote a local food system reflect a three pronged approach:

- 1. Extension's Ag team continues to seek funding opportunities that support its collaboration with county, regional, and state partners to serve consumers and farmers by promoting local food availability and consumption in the county and region;**
- 2. Extension's Ag team continues to host educational, business and marketing workshops and conferences using current land grant university (including Cornell University) research resources and tools, and presenters—these presentations are critical to support and sustain an agricultural economy in this large rural county, thereby making education a key focus to further the local food system;**
- 3. Extension's Ag team, partners, and farmers continue to identify strategies that enable farmers to take advantage of opportunities to make local food available to all in institutional settings, schools, to SNAP recipients and consumers who wish to buy locally produced food from close by farmers; and that facilitate their compliance with government food procurement regulations and labeling, while maximizing their time, sales, and profits through regional marketing to new consumers and institutions.**