

**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.

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i> | April 1, 2016-March 31, 2017 |
| Authorized Representative Name: | Todd Peetz |
| Authorized Representative Phone: | 330-297-3613 |
| Authorized Representative Email: | tpeetz@pcrpc.org |
| Recipient Organization Name: | Portage County Regional Planning Commission |
| Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement: | Feasibility study for a Food Hub in Portage County, Ohio |
| Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i> | 15LFPPOH0058 |
| Year Grant was Awarded: | 2015 |
| Project City/State: | Ravenna, Ohio 44266 |
| Total Awarded Budget: | \$17,901 |

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: _____

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.

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: **Form a steering committee of stakeholders who can attend meetings and provide input and expertise for the Feasibility Study**
 - a. Progress Made: **The Steering Committee met several times and evaluated proposals and discussed progress made and alternatives suggestions provided by the consultant.**
 - b. Impact on Community: Community Concurred that we should move forward, no financial impact to date.
 - ii. Goal/Objective 2: **Chose a consultant to develop a feasibility Study**
 - a. Progress Made: **Consultant was chosen in March 2016 and work completed March 27th, 2017.**
 - b. Impact on Community: **There has been considerable discussion about moving the feasibility study forward and how that would be accomplished. No Financial impact to date.**
 - iii. Goal/Objective 3: Identify foo hub service options that meet the needs of growers and buyers and low access/low income residents. (this encompasses several goals, but is the overall trend for the latter part of the Feasibility Study project).
 - a. Progress Made: **This goal has been satisfactorily achieved as determined by the steering committee. We are excited to move to the next level and given several options of how to get there using our existing resources and lessons learned through the study.**
 - b. Impact on Community: **Not applicable to date.**
2. Quantify the overall impact of the project on the intended beneficiaries, if applicable, from the baseline date (the start of the award performance period, September 30, 2015). Include further explanation if necessary.
 - i. Number of direct jobs created: **NA**
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: **NA**
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: **2 part-time jobs created to assist in preparing the feasibility study.**
 - iv. Number of markets expanded: **NA**
 - v. Number of new markets established: **NA**
 - vi. Market sales increased by \$**NA** and increased by **NA**%.
 - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: **NA**
 - a. Percent Increase: **NA**
 - b.
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? **The Feasibility study included the entire population of Portage County, and would include both low income and ethnicity, but the study was to determine how to best utilize existing producers with consumers which included really anyone and everyone from those two categories. The proposal for the Feasibility Study first identified affinity groups related to the creation of a food hub, then to convene regular meetings to give these parties the opportunity to provide input**

on the direction the food hub should go based on the findings contained within the study.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.
 - i. Who are your community partners? **During the Studying and continuing are the Portage County Health Department, several economic development groups, local farmers, Hiram College and Kent State University and other local food organizations.**
 - ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project? **There was a great deal of insight provided by the group and we were able to drill down on several topics to see how relevant they were and important to this process going forward.**
 - iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this LFPP grant? **We plan to continue our discussions of how to move the feasibility study into an actual food hub. Everyone on the steering committee has agree to continue to participate in the process going forward as we take our next steps.**

5. did you use contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project? **We hired ACEnet to do the work with their proven track record and experience along with lessons learned from other communities trying to accomplish the same things. There were several things they felt we were strong in and others that we may not be as strong. It was great to bounce our ideas and concepts off of their experience.**

6. Have you publicized any results yet?*

 - i. If yes, how did you publicize the results? **We had a community meeting in January to discuss the findings and had the Regional Planning Commission Board accept the findings of the results in April. There was a newspaper press release as well.**
 - ii. To whom did you publicize the results? **Mostly to those willing to attend the public hearing, members of the Steering Committee, the Regional Planning Commission and highlights in the press release.**
 - iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? **There were probably 100+ who were directly involved in the notification of these results.**

*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? **We relied mostly on the Steering committee to give us feedback to share with the consultant. We did have the Regional Planning Commission Board accept the results but their feedback did not have an impact on the report.**
 - ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)? **Most of the feedback that was relayed back to the consultant had to do with grammar or spelling mistakes. The content for the had been tweaked during the process.**

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? **There was no income generated as part of the study.**

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). **The biggest lesson learned is we selected the consultant late as a result of not getting an adequate response to our first solicitation for consulting services. We struggled with getting our surveys completed especially by consumer users like restaurants. We utilized word of mouth through the farming community as the best way to get them to attend community meetings and have them fill out the surveys. There seemed to be a problem with the timing of the surveys as the farmers we in full swing when the surveys went out and we need to shake the bushes a little to encourage their participation.**
- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving: **Ultimately all of our goals we believe were met. But we did have to reach out a little bit more to both the consumer and the producers to get them to participate. We were told it takes a while for the community to recognize that their input is valuable.**
- 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: **Once we became familiar with the process it was a very user friendly process and thank you for all of your assistance.**

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 was a feasibility study; we have submitted a farmer's market grant to further this effort. We plan to start out small as funds and resources are limited by first making a web connection and then collaborate with surrounding web-based and brick and mortar food hub enterprises to expand our presence but also theirs. We believe this collaboration will further increase awareness in the market for both producers and consumers.**

We hope that once established that we can grow the online market into a brick and mortar facility with sales in excess of \$1 million that will lead to full time positions (1-8) dedicated to the farmers market and the community. We believe this a community effort and not just an agency or individual effort.

- 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?

Contained in the feasibility study are multiple options for us to move forward. Our first step has been taken to apply for a USDA Farmers Market Grant. From there we will see how we can fully utilize the recommendations provided. There is strong community support and desire to see this project continue on.