

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 - September 30, 2017
Authorized Representative Name:	Dawn Roch
Authorized Representative Phone:	401-392-4230
Authorized Representative Email:	bddr@me.com
Recipient Organization Name:	Roch's Fresh Foods, Inc
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Roch's Fresh Foods Local Harvest Program
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	15LFPPPR10141
Year Grant was Awarded:	2015
Project City/State:	West Greenwich/RI
Total Awarded Budget:	\$89,000.00

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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: Raymond Roch; Email: president@rochs.com; Phone: 401-392-4230

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 enhance the aggregation, processing and distribution of local and regional produce.
 - a. Progress Made: Our first goal was to enhance our methods of aggregation, processing and the distribution of local and regional fruits and vegetables in order to better serve the FFVP and FINE programs and the Pilot Project for Procurement of Unprocessed Fruits and Vegetables. We have accomplished this by purchasing a processing machine. Further, our team of processors and Production Managers completed the Food Safety Course, thus ensuring the adherence to USDA proper handling and storage protocols.
 - b. Impact on Community: Roch’s has been able to cull produce from many more local and regional growers due to our ability to process properly and in greater volume. At the time of our mid-term report we had established new relationships with 4 growers. To date, we are now working with 6 new growers and 4 smaller growers, “Mom and Pop” farms, if you will.
 - ii. Goal/Objective 2: To implement more efficient means of aggregation and production of local and regional produce.
 - a. Progress Made: All our purchased equipment is installed and fully operational. Thus, our efficiency of production is outstanding. Being knowledgeable in the proper handling of produce from intake and storage to processing and final distribution was an important goal and one we met early on within the grant period. Becoming HACCP certified was an early objective that was fully realized as well.
 - b. Impact on Community: Roch’s has been better situated to intake and process a variety of offerings from our local growers. It has been exciting to be able to include diverse offerings for our Local Harvest Program.
 - iii. Goal/Objective 3: To improve safe handling, therefore ensuring the quality of produce being handled for Roch’s Local harvest Program.
 - a. Progress Made: All our processors and Production managers have completed the Food Safety Managers course.
 - b. Impact on Community: While there has been no direct impact on the local community, per se, the indirect impact is the proper handling and processing of local and regional produce for Roch’s Local harvest Program.
 - iv. Goal/Objective 4: To extend the season of local produce offerings through improved handling and production.
 - a. Progress made: As Roch’s is better situated to handle and process properly through thorough training, we have been able to intake local harvests more efficiently and in greater volume.
 - b. Impact on the community: While the immediate impact on the community is difficult to quantify, we are assured that the local

growers and farmers can take pride in knowing that Roch's is able to properly handle, process and distribute their yields. Their success directly contributes to the success and continued growth and reach of Roch's Local Harvest Program.

- v. Goal/Objective 5: To provide educational and informational resources to local and regional farms and nutritional information about local produce via links on our website.
 - a. Progress made: As stated in our mid-term report, being able to upload educational resources and disseminate information about our local and regional growers through links via the Roch's Fresh Foods website has been a challenging task. Our redesign of the old website was more costly than anticipated. As we neglected to add a line item for website work in our initial budget we have had to rethink the amount of Roch's funds that should go toward this goal. Our website has been completely redesigned and currently we have culled the informational links we will be adding to the Roch's Fresh Foods website. We plan to begin the educational and informational updates after the 1st of the year.
 - b. Impact on the community: To date, the direct impact on the community cannot be measured as the educational links have not been uploaded to the website. Roch's will be able to allocate more funds to the website completion after the 1st of the new year.
2. Quantify the overall impact of the project on the intended beneficiaries, if applicable, from the baseline date (Include further explanation if necessary).
- i. Number of direct jobs created: Within Roch's Fresh Foods we added 15 full time processors across all three shifts. We have hired 4 new full time drivers. We hired 3 new office workers to assist with the Local Harvest program.
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: We have retained approximately 110 jobs.
 - a. Number of indirect jobs created: It is difficult to measure how many indirect jobs have been created. We can confidently say that our program has helped retain jobs within our local and regional farming community. We have expanded our LFPP to the city of Springfield, Massachusetts, which includes 34 schools. Thus, helping retain those jobs indirectly.
 - iii. Number of markets expanded: No new markets were expanded.
 - iv. Number of new markets established: We have established buying and sourcing relationships with 10 new farmers and growers.
 - v. Market sales increased by \$0 and decreased by 0%.
 - vi. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: Roch's Fresh Foods now sources from approximately 35 different farms and growers.
 - a. Percent Increase: There has been a 28% in farmers/growers who have benefited from this program.
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?

We have been able to expand into the school districts of Coventry, Cumberland, Lincoln and Springfield, Massachusetts school system. Thus broaden our reach into these underserved communities. As we were successfully audited by the USDA we are now entering our third year as being an approved SDA for the Pilot Project for the Procurement of Unprocessed Fruits and Vegetables for the state of Connecticut.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.
 - i. Who are your community partners? We do not have any community partners.
 - ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project? NA
 - iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this LFPP grant? NA
5. Did you use contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project? Roch's did not engage any contractors.
6. Have you publicized any results yet? * We have not publicized the results.
 - i. If yes, how did you publicize the results? Roch's will update the website with the results.
 - ii. To whom did you publicize the results? NA
 - iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? NA

*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? Roch's Fresh Foods has not formally collected any feedback from the community. However, we have received many positive comments in regards to the quality and variety of the produce supplied for our Local harvest Program. We have also been praised for our support of local growers, both large and small.
 - ii. What feedback was relayed? "in this day and age of big, impersonalized service it's heartwarming to know that a 4th generation store is supportive of us local guys who are passionate about what we do."
8. Budget Summary:
 - i. As part of the LFPP closeout procedures, you are required to submit the SF-425 Check here if you have completed the SF-425 and are submitting it with this report:
 - ii. Did the project generate any income? What income may have been generated was offset by the hiring of processors and drivers to accommodate the new participants of Rich's Local Harvest Program.
 - 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). Overall, this project was a positive experience. Patience and flexibility are necessary when working with perishables.

Further, being able to have a “plan B” so to speak when you can’t adhere planned schedules is a must! Having to do more site work than anticipated before installing the new equipment was unexpected. This unexpected delay allowed for further training of our Productions managers and processors before installation. As we had committed to local growers, it was imperative not to miss a day of intake or production, and we didn’t!

- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving: Our goals were met, albeit it took longer than we planned.
- 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 helpful advice I would give, the lesson learned, is to be organized and anticipate possible set backs and plan accordingly.

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. The work of this project will continue past the performance period. While it will slow down over the winter growing months, we will resume full force come February planning for the peak harvest months. The winter months will be focused on community outreach through our website. We are anticipating more participants in our Local Harvest Program in the coming year.
- 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? One idea that we have talked about is having a mobile version of our Local Harvest Program. Some form of farm truck that could bring local produce to underserved communities. This would be an outreach to individuals and not just institutions and schools. We are in the “talking” phase and have yet to put down solid ideas.