

FARMERS' MARKET AND LOCAL FOOD PROMOTION PROGRAM (FMLFPP)
Final Performance Report

The final performance report summarizes the outcome and activities of your FMLFPP award objectives. Failure to submit acceptable closeout reports for an existing grant within 90 calendar days following the grant end date may result in exclusion from future AMS grant opportunities.

This final report will be made available to the public once it is approved by FMLFPP 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. For example, if the Final Performance Report form is six (6) pages before you begin entering your project information into the form, your report may be up to 21 pages (6 pages + 15 pages).

Provide answers to **each question** and all applicable outcome and indicators as it applies to your project. If you are unable to provide a response explain why. It is preferred that you email your completed performance report to your assigned FMLFPP Grants Management Specialist to avoid delays. In case of any extraordinary reason a faxed report can be accepted; please notify your assigned Grants Management Specialist to inform about your submission.

Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. October 1, 2016 -September 30, 2017)</i>	September 29, 2015- December 27, 2017
Date Report Submitted	December 29,2017
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	15LFPPVT0109
Recipient Organization Name:	Rutland Area Farm and Food Link
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Farm Fresh Connect: Grown Locally , Bought Online, Delivered Fresh to Workplaces and Community Sites
Authorized Representative Name:	Michael Raymond
Authorized Representative Phone:	802-342-5744
Authorized Representative Email:	mike@rutlandfarmandfood.org
Year Grant was Awarded:	2015
Amount of Award:	\$73,750

FMLFPP 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: _____

1. Executive Summary—In 200 words or less, describe the project's need, purpose, goals, and quantifiable outcomes:

Our regions vibrancy and long term food security relies on the success of local farms. Local farms are also a vital part of our region's economy and culture. Our mission at RAFFL is to work to get more local food into the community thereby helping local farms and farmers and getting community members locally grown nutritious foods. By providing a support system for framers and establishing new outlets like our Farm Fresh Connect Program to help local farmers sell their products, RAFFL is fostering a positive economic climate for local farmers. Our goal with the Farm Fresh Connect program is to create an on- line farmers market that successfully aggregates and distributes product to a large number of market partners (businesses and organizations) and benefits a larger pool of employees and community members.

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.

2. Please provide the approved project's objectives:

Objectives		Completed	
		Yes	No*
1	Maximize community and producer participation in the program while streamlining overhead and securing a long term plan for financing the overhead required promoting marketing and coordination support for the programs.	x	
2	Achieve a positive cash flow by 2017		x
3	Provide a robust year-round market local farmers and food producers in	x	
4	Increase the consumption of high quality, local foods by providing consumers with convenient access to those products.	x	
5			
6			
7			

**If no is selected for any of the listed objectives, you must expand upon this in the challenges section.*

3. List your accomplishments for the project's performance period and indicate how these accomplishments assisted in the fulfillment of your project's objectives. Please include additional objectives approved by FMLFPP during the grant performance period, and highlight the impact that activities had on the project's beneficiaries.

Accomplishments	Relevance to Objective, Outcome, and/or Indicator
During the grant period the Farm Fresh Connect program generated \$108,906.27 in sales. The average customer order was \$22	Outcome 2
We had 855 customers sign up for the Farm Fresh Connect Program in 74 various towns and cities in Vermont	Outcome 1 & 2
We had 32 local farms selling goods as part of the Farm Fresh Connect Program during the grant period. There were 506 various types of products in the following categories offer to customers: Vegetables, Vegetable Starts, Baked Goods, Dairy, Fermented Foods, Fruits, Fresh Herbs, Maple and Honey Products, Meat and Poultry, Dry Beans, Sauces, Prepared Food, Pickles and Preserves.	Outcome 2 & 3
During the grant period farmers listed 399,303 sale items for customers to purchase.	Outcome 3

We had 18 pickup locations in central Vermont where the local farm products were delivered. They included businesses, schools, community centers and health centers.	Outcome 1

4. Please list any challenges experienced during the project’s period of performance. Provide the corrective actions taken to address these issues.

Challenges (Issues)	Corrective Actions and/or Project Changes (s)
The program had very few challenges. Our positive experience and relationship with area farmers was a major asset in conducting the program.	
The major challenge was some staff turnover during the project.	We were able to hire and train competent individuals who quickly and successfully ran the program.

5. Quantify the overall progress on the outcomes and indicators of your project. Include further explanation if necessary.

The top 3 farms for sale of good were:

Evening Song Farm 23%;Dutchess Farm 19%;Smith Maple Crest Farm 17%

The top five products ordered were:

Ground Beef 5%; Spinich 4%;Carrotts 3%; Burger Patties 2% and Lettuce Mix 2%

Outcome 1: To Increase Consumption of and Access to Locally and Regionally Produced Agricultural Products.

Indicator	Description	Number
1.	Total number of consumers, farm and ranch operations, or wholesale buyers reached	888
1.a.	The number that gained knowledge on how to buy or sell local/regional food OR aggregate, store, produce, and/or distribute local/regional food	32
1.b.	The number that reported an intention to buy or sell local/regional food OR aggregate, store, produce, and/or distribute local/regional food	32
1.c.	The number that reported buying, selling, consuming more or supporting the consumption of local/regional food that they aggregate, store, produce, and/or distribute	424
2.	Total number of individuals (culinary professionals, institutional kitchens, entrepreneurs such as kitchen incubators/shared-use kitchens, etc.) reached	2
2.a.	The number that gained knowledge on how to access, produce, prepare, and/or preserve locally and regionally produced agricultural products	391
2.b.	The number that reported an intention to access, produce, prepare, and/or preserve locally and regionally produced agricultural products	855
2.c.	The number that reported supplementing their diets with locally and regionally produced agricultural products that they produced, prepared, preserved, and/or obtained	391

Outcome 2: Increase Customers and sales of local and regional agricultural products.

Indicator	Description	Number
1.	Sales increased as a result of marketing and/or promotion activities during the project performance period.	
	Original Sales Amount (in dollars) 0	
	Resulted Sales Amount (in dollars) \$108,906.27	
	Percent Change $((n_{\text{final}} - n_{\text{initial}}) / n_{\text{initial}}) * 100 = \% \text{ change}$ 100%	
2.	Customer counts increased during the project performance period.	
	Original Customer Count 0	
	Resulted Customer Count 855	
	Percent Change $((n_{\text{final}} - n_{\text{initial}}) / n_{\text{initial}}) * 100 = \% \text{ change}$ 100%	

Outcome 3: Develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets.

Indicator	Description	Number
1.	Number of new and/or existing delivery systems/access points of those reached that expanded and/or improved offerings of	
1.a.	Farmers markets 0	
1.b.	Roadside stands 0	
1.c.	Community supported agriculture programs 0	
1.d.	Agritourism activities 0	
1.e.	Other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities 0	
1.f.	Local and regional Food Business Enterprises that process, aggregate, distribute, or store locally and regionally produced agricultural products	18

Indicator	Description	Number
2.	Number of local and regional farmers and ranchers, processors, aggregators, and/or distributors that reported	
2.a.	An increase in revenue expressed in dollars	32
2.b.	A gained knowledge about new market opportunities through technical assistance and education programs	32
3.	Number of	
3.a.	New rural/urban careers created (Difference between "jobs" and "careers": jobs are net gain of paid employment; new businesses created or adopted can indicate new careers)	3
3.b.	Jobs maintained/created	1
3.c.	New beginning farmers who went into local/regional food production	0
3.d.	Socially disadvantaged famers who went into local/regional food production	0
3.e.	Business plans developed	8

Outcome 4: Improve the food safety of locally and regionally produced agricultural products.
Only applicable to projects focused on food safety! n/a

Indicator	Description	Number
1.	Number of individuals who learned about prevention, detection, control, and intervention food safety practices	
2.	Number of those individuals who reported increasing their food safety skills and knowledge	
3.	Number of growers or producers who obtained on-farm food safety certifications (such as Good Agricultural Practices or Good Handling Practices)	

Outcome 5: Quantify the overall progress on this outcome indicator based on relevant project activities not covered above.

This indicator must reflect the project narrative's required additional outcome indicator.

6. Discuss your community partnerships (include applicant staff and external partners).
 - i. Who were your community partners?
Our community partners were The Vermont Foodbank (storage of goods), Vermont Country Store (food storage, help with delivery, help with packing, financial assistance) Green Mountain Power (Product delivery)
 - ii. How did they contribute to the overall results of the FMLFPP project?
Partners helped with the storage, delivery and packing of weekly food orders.
 - iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMLFPP grant?
All partners have agreed to continue their support of the Farm Fresh Connect Program in the future.
 - iv. What feedbacks have the partners provided (specific comments) about the results of the project?
They all have commented and agreed that the program is helping with the wellness activities of the local drop off sites and provide a major help with growing the local farm economy.
7. How do you plan to publicize the results?
News release to local newspaper
 - i. To whom (i.e. people, entities) do you plan to publicize the project results?

General public via newspaper

- ii. When do you plan to publicize the results?

Mid-January 2018

*If you have publicized the results, please 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).

Will include some of the promotional material used in the Farm Fresh Connect Program with this report.

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

Yes, we held periodic meetings with local area farmers and farmers that have participated in our Farm Fresh Connect program. We have also sent out online surveys to consumers that have participated in the Farm Fresh Connect Program.

Some of the feedback is as follows:

From Participants in the Farm Fresh Connect Program:

63 people completed our on line survey:

- 85% of those responding agreed that the Farm Fresh Connect Program has encouraged them to try new foods and new recipes.
- 88% reported that the Farm Fresh connect Program has encouraged them to eat healthier and fresher foods.
- 76% responded that they know local farm and farmers better as a result of the Farm Fresh Connect Program
- 92% responded that the Farm Fresh Connect Program helps me better financially support local farmers.
- 64% responded that they have closer ties with their community
- 79% responded that they have encouraged others to take part in the Farm Fresh Connect Program.

From the Farmers:

- 82% of Framers agree that the Farm Fresh Connect Program is important to their farms viability
- 100% responded that they are very satisfied with the Farm Fresh Connect Program in selling their Product
- 100% responded that their sales have increased as a result of the farm Fresh Connect Program
- 100% responded that the farm Fresh Connect Program helped them to promote their farm and products to customers
- 84% said the Farm Fresh Connect gave them access to new markets

- i. If so, how did you collect the information? See above
- ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)? See above

9. 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: Yes
- ii. Did the project generate any income? x Yes No
 - a. If yes, \$ 12,159.21 generated and how was it used to further the objectives of this project? Funding was used to offset some operational cost and help to achieve the goal of having the program experience a positive cash flow.
- iii. In the table below include the total amount of **federal funds spent** during the grant performance period (**Do not** include matching or in-kind contributions):

Categories	Amount Approved in Budget	Actual Federal Expenditures (Federal Funds ONLY)
Personnel:	48600	47520.34
Fringe:	5120	4412.21
Contractual:	4500	2988
Equipment:		
Travel:	2750	4877.04
Supplies:	1953	1171.04
Other:	1788	427.25
Indirect Costs:	9039	9353.99
TOTAL:	73750	70749.87

- iv. **ONLY for LFPP recipients:** Provide the amount of matching funds/in-kind contributions used during the grant performance period.

Categories	Match Approved in Budget	Actual Match Expenditures
Personnel:	10588	15932.20
Fringe:	2118	575.01
Contractual:		
Equipment:		
Travel:	2266	
Supplies:	1760	1600.31
Other:	8948	5200
Indirect Costs:		
TOTAL:	25680	23307.52

10. 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). It was helpful to have community partners who assisted in the packing and delivery of product. It was also helpful to be available to farmers that had a need for support for the use of technology in the program.
- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving: Our goal of positive cash flow was never fully realized. More time is needed to grow the program to a point where this goal would be realized. In starting any business it takes time before positive cash flow is fully achieved.

- 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:
We learned that there is a need and a desire for people to support local farmers and to know where their food is coming from and to include local and nutritious food as part of their diet.

- iv. Discuss if and how the result of this project can be adapted to other regions, communities, and/or agricultural systems.

The Farm Fresh Connect model can and should be duplicated in other New England locations. It would help in the delivery of locally grown food and aid in the growth of the local agriculture economy.

11. Future Work:

- i. How will you continue the work of this project beyond this grant? In other words, how will you implement 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 Rutland Area Farm and Food Link had many challenges during 2017. While program staff worked diligently and successfully running our varied programs (which included the Farm Fresh Connect Program) there were some administrative and financial issues that the agency's Board of Directors faced. After much discussion and meetings the Board decided to close the Rutland Area Farm and Food Link at the end of 2017. Prior to this decision the Board made an all-out effort to make sure that many of the programs run by RAFFL would continue under the leadership of some of our partners. The main priority was the continuations of the Farm Fresh Connect Program. It is with pleasure that I report the Farm Fresh Connect program will continue under the very capable leadership of the Vermont Foodbank. In addition the Vermont Country Store has agreed to finance the operation of the Farm Fresh Connect Program and assist in its future growth and expansion. Both consumers and farmers are pleased that the program is going to continue. The Foodbank has also hired all RAFFL staff that were working on the Farm Fresh Connect 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? N/A

Marketing and Additional Farm Fresh Connect Material

Information on some of our Farmers

Alchemy Gardens

Alchemy Gardens is run by Scott and Lindsay Courcelle. Scott grew up in Rutland and his family has agricultural roots in the area, with ancestors owning a greenhouse business in Rutland, a dairy in Shrewsbury, and a Christmas tree farm in Belmont. Lindsay was born and raised in the wheat fields of Kansas, and eventually moved to Seattle where she attended high school and college. The couple love to fill their down time playing music together, traveling, cooking, spending time in the woods, swimming, and being with friends and family.

Yoder Farm

Yoder Farm is owned by Ryan and Rachel Yoder. They specialize in dry beans and popcorn, as well as berries, chickens, and some vegetables. They also produce value-added products such as cider vinegar, apple butter, and apple cider.

Evening Song Farm

Ryan Wood-Beauchamp and Kara Fitzgerald began the adventure of Evening Song Farm in Cuttingsville, Vermont after starting a small CSA in northeastern Pennsylvania. Evening Song Farm grows about 5 acres of vegetables for CSA (community supported agriculture), farmers' markets, restaurants, co-ops, schools, and camps. They specialize in varieties that are unique, heirloom, and visually appealing, as well as those selected for exquisite flavor.

Dutchess Farm

The Chamberlain family of Dutchess Farm has been growing vegetables naturally since 1986. Along with their experienced and dedicated local staff, they farm ten acres, five of which are in vegetable production each year. Dutchess Farm also includes nine greenhouses that extend and enhance the season.

Kilpatrick Family Farm

Kilpatrick Family Farm is a family-run vegetable, small fruit and livestock farm founded in 2003 by brothers Michael and Philip Kilpatrick in Middle Granville, N.Y. Our mission is to connect our customers with great food and revitalize the local food ecosystem. As organic farmers, we believe the work we do is changing the way our region eats.

Trifolium Farms

Trifolium Farms is the small biodynamic farm of Benjamin Mithoefer and Jennifer Langstaff-French growing log-grown shiitake mushrooms, herbs, veggies and maintaining a symbiotic relationship with our bees in order to provide our communities with high quality raw honey, beeswax and propolis products. We offer dried herb teas, simple tinctures and our Home Grownola, a specialty granola formulated with immune enhancing and stress relieving herbs. We also provide gourmet freshly prepared food and fresh juices with ingredients from our own and neighboring farms at our local farmer's market, enjoying spreading good tastes and good cheer.

Smith Maple Crest Farm, LLC.

For over 204 years, eight generations of Smiths have farmed more than 400 acres of

pristine Vermont countryside producing a variety of quality agriculture products. The focus of our most recent generation has resulted in our award winning Pure Vermont Maple Syrup and Natural Vermont Beef.

PLEW Farm

PLEW Farm is a family operated farm located in Mount Holly, Vermont. The family shares a passion for being outside, farming, gardening, and living simpler lifestyles. They have lived in Mount Holly for the past 29 years, and love the small town community we live in.

3 Bears Bakery

The Konstant family's 3 Bears Bakery has been in business since 2008 selling artisan breads, cakes, pastries and shortbreads. Their product line focuses on English and European baked goods. They do not knowingly use GMO ingredients, intentionally searching for companies that state their ingredients are non-GMO. Their whole grains and some of their flours are organic. For a greater selection you can find 3 Bears Bakery at the Rutland farmers' markets year round.

Bridport Creamery, LLC.

Bridport Creamery is located on Nicole Foster's family farm; the cheese curds and Swisserella are both made from the milk from their cows. Nicole, her brother, and her sister are the 3rd generation on Iroquois Acres in Bridport.

A desire to be self-employed and to put her 13 acres into agricultural use led Julie Danyew to goat farming in 2007. After a year and a half working at Consider Bardwell, a commercial goat dairy, learning to make cheese, and then several years honing these new skills at a local family farm, Crawford Family Farm, making and selling cheese, it was time to look into self-employment.

Though Nicole and Julie knew each other from before, it was their chiropractor who re-introduced them, realizing they were on similar journeys. After several years of working together and planning, the two women opened Bridport Creamery in 2013.

Blackpowder Farm

Blackpowder Farm began in 2011 in an effort to grow some of the raw ingredients used in our Blackpowder Foods product. These products, which are based in sweet, savory, and spicy recipes, include pickles, preserves, granolas, pancake mixes, cookies, and farm fresh eggs.

After logging 6 acres from a 26 acre wood lot, Blackpowder Farm and the family homestead was created. David and Kara Soulia are new farmers with a passion for learning and developing sustainable systems and delicious foods that can be passed down for future generations. The farm currently has sheep, goats, chickens, ducks, rabbits, and miniature donkeys along with acres of wild blackberries, raspberries, and blueberries. Their large greenhouse moved last summer from Woodstock, Vermont and a new pallet barn will be completed this spring. Additional fruit trees and shrubs will be added to develop a full complement of locally grown fruits.

Taking Root

Taking Root was founded by Lani Courtney. With a background in biology and chemistry as well as a passion for plants and medicine, herbalism was a natural path. She is currently enrolled in a three year program at the Vermont Center for Integrative Herbalism.

Get Cracking

Grace Davy, the chef owner of Get Cracking , started the business in May 2013. Get Cracking Kitchen strives to offer something for everyone. Grace love whole grain flavors and textures in desserts and all the gluten free cookies and crackers offered here have whole grain flours, organic sugars (not too much though!) and local unpastuerized eggs (except for vegan items). Grace also cooks and bakes with lots of local vegetables! The Get Cracking kitchen is not a gluten free kitchen but all these products are made very carefully on one day.

Raiche's Vermont Made Salsa

Raiche's Vermont Made Salsa is owned by Mary Jane and Bob Raiche. The company came about a few years ago when Mary Jane needed to use up some tomatoes from her sizable home garden. Mary Jane always uses fresh ingredients, local when possible, and hand-packs each jar. Once she started receiving rave reviews and requests for her salsa, Bob got to work making the product available to more people. Now they have made close to 12,000 jars of salsa and sell in co-ops, grocery stores, and specialty shops throughout the region.

Hogs n' Dirt

Hogs N'Dirt, owned by Joe Davis, is located in the beautiful rolling hills of West Rutland. Their animals are all free range pastured without added antibiotics and hormones. Hogs N' Dirt prides itself in having very lean cuts of pork and beef.

