

## 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](mailto: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.

<b>Report Date Range:</b> <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	September 30, 2014-September 30, 2016
<b>Authorized Representative Name:</b>	Brenda W. Hunt
<b>Authorized Representative Phone:</b>	Brenda W. Hunt
<b>Authorized Representative Email:</b>	brenda@heartandhandhouse.org
<b>Recipient Organization Name:</b>	Heart and Hand House, Inc.
<b>Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:</b>	Barbour County Aggregation Center
<b>Grant Agreement Number:</b> <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-LFPPX-WV-0189
<b>Year Grant was Awarded:</b>	2014
<b>Project City/State:</b>	Philippi, WV
<b>Total Awarded Budget:</b>	\$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.
  - i. **Goal/Objective 1: Hiring Aggregation Center Manager (part-time)**
    - a. Progress Made: **Initial hire July 6, 2015**
    - b. Impact on Community: **By facilitating volume sales of local produce, the work of the Aggregation Center Manager (ACM) has resulted in an increased market opportunity for at least 8 local growers and increased use of local produce in 8 local schools and two local colleges. One local restaurant, a catering business, and a state academy have also taken advantage of the opportunity to purchase fresh, local produce through this project. This not only keeps more food dollars in the local economy, but also increases the amount of fresh, local product available or served to consumers. The ACM has also worked corporately and individually with growers to provide or facilitate production planning for larger-scale markets and training with regard to safe handling procedures and product quality expectations.**
  - ii. **Goal/Objective 2: Purchase/Installation of Equipment**
    - a. Progress Made: **A compressor was purchased for an existing produce cooler used to hold product. Large, mobile coolers and produce boxes were purchased to ensure that product could be transported safely. A walk-in freezer has been ordered, but not yet installed, as of the project end date. Purchase and installation of additional equipment needed to wash, dry, and package fresh produce and/or freeze and package produce for longer shelf life has been delayed, pending necessary renovations and additional funding. We are currently able to collect and distribute products that do not require further processing, such as lettuce, greens, potatoes, squash, etc. It is anticipated, however, that we will be able to do some basic processing (wash, dry, pack, freeze) by the spring of 2017.**
    - b. Impact on Community: **The process of getting fresh produce from farm to table has been streamlined by the creation of a central hub where multiple producers can drop off their produce to be sorted, separated and delivered to commercial and institutional buyers. The equipment and supplies purchased ensure that the produce can be stored, handled and transported safely.**
  - iii. **Goal/Objective 3: Develop Relationships with Schools and Other Buyers**
    - a. Progress Made: **The ACM has successfully cultivated relationships with buyers for two area public school systems and two colleges, who are purchasing produce through our project on a regular basis. One local restaurant, a catering business, and a state academy have also purchased product from us on occasion. Contact has been made with other interested buyers, but there is not yet sufficient product to supply them all.**
    - b. Impact on Community: **More local product is being consumed in area schools and those food dollars are staying in the local economy. Additional markets are being opened up for local producers.**

- iv. Goal/Objective 4: **Begin Aggregated Sale of Local Product**
    - a. Progress Made: **During the latter half of the first year, there were \$1,200 in sales. During the second year product sales totaled more than \$6,900.**
    - b. Impact on Community: **More local product is being consumed in area schools and other institutions, and those food dollars are staying in the local economy. Marketing opportunities for local producers are being expanded.**
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: **1**
  - ii. Number of jobs retained: **1**
  - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: **not known**
  - iv. Number of markets expanded: **1 (Community Garden Market)**
  - v. Number of new markets established: **At least 11 new buyers of local produce have been cultivated this project period**
  - vi. Market sales increased by **\$8,132 over the project period** and increased by **just under 10%**.
  - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: **3 in the first year; 8 in the second year**
    - a. Percent Increase: **37%**
  - viii. 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? **Facilitating produce sales on a larger scale allowed us to expand our existing customer base to include 8 public schools, 2 colleges, and occasionally a restaurant, catering business and state academy. Their use of local product expands our reach to children, in particular, and to the general public, which in our area includes a high number of low income/low access individuals.**
3. Discuss your community partnerships.
- i. Who are your community partners? **WVU Extension, WVU Small Farms Center, WV Department of Education-Office of Child Nutrition, Value Chain Cluster Initiative (VC2), New Appalachian Farm and Research Center (NAFRC), Tygart Valley Growers Association (TVGA), Preston County Growers Association.**
  - ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project? **WVU Extension, WVU Small Farms Center, Office of Child Nutrition and VC2 have provided technical assistance and networking support; the Office of Child Nutrition and NAFRC have also provided planning assistance and additional funding; we also share a project staff person with NAFRC.**
  - iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this LFPP grant? **WVU Extension and the Small Farms Center will continue to provide avenues for networking, education and outreach; the Office of Child Nutrition will continue to be a valuable partner in helping us expand our market reach into area schools; VC2 will continue to be a source for training and technical assistance that may be needed; NAFRC, in particular, has invested personnel and funding resources to assist in the development of this project and will be instrumental in helping us move this project forward and grow.**

4. did you use contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project? **N/A**
  
5. Have you publicized any results yet?
  - i. If yes, how did you publicize the results? **Only verbally**
  - ii. To whom did you publicize the results? **Constituents, general public**
  - iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? **Approximately 100**

\*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).
  
6. Have you collected any feedback from your community and additional stakeholders about your work?
  - i. If so, how did you collect the information? **Phone follow-up with buyers**
  - ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)? **Buyers are pleased about the opportunity to purchase local foods on a regular basis and like the fact that they can pool product from multiple producers through one primary contact.**
  
7. 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? **Yes**
    - a. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award? **Aggregated sales generated a total of \$8,132. Most of the income earned was paid to the produce growers (\$7,892); the remainder (\$240) was retained by Heart and Hand for operating costs.**
  
8. 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).
 

**A few months after the Aggregation Center Manager was hired, the individual resigned to take another job. Faced with having to search for a new candidate and begin the process all over, we were, instead, able to partner with another organization that had hired an individual for a very similar role and was already familiar to many of our local growers. By agreeing to work together and share a staff person, we were not only able to avoid having to start from scratch and rebuild the grower and customer relationships, but were able expand our reach to a more regional scope. The development of numerous partner relationships around the region has had a positive impact on the project and will be instrumental in its continued success.**
  - ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:
 

**Our first hurdle was finding the right person for the role of Aggregation Center Manager. The job requires a unique combination of agricultural knowledge, good communication skills, salesmanship, customer service, organization, and attention to detail. Delays in completing structural renovations to the space needed for this**

**project was also a significant factor in preventing us from being able to move forward as scheduled. In the absence of funding to hire a contractor or purchase materials, much of the work has been done by volunteers as they were available and as materials could be purchased or were donated. The facility used for this project is old and we encountered some unexpected costs related to the renovation.**

- 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:

**Establishing sound community partnerships and ensuring that there is adequate staffing committed to the project is essential.**

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 role of the ACM has already been increased to a full-time position and will continue building on the progress that has been made and help us move on to next steps. Once the project facility is equipped and approved for processing, it would create employment opportunity for at least one or two additional personnel. Production planning with current growers will continue, along with recruitment of new growers who are interested in providing product to market, resulting in an increase in the amount of local produce utilized in the region and an increase in sales/grower income. We also are evaluating training that could be offered to individuals who could be employed by farmers as production ramps up in the future, with the hope that additional jobs can be created in the community.**

- 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?

**Future activities, for the near term, are to simply continue building the customer/grower relationships and increase product availability and sales. Extending accessibility to local product beyond the normal growing season through freezing or dehydration will be the next step.**