

## 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](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>	October 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2014 – June 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2015
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<b>Recipient Organization Name:</b>	Bould Development
<b>Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:</b>	Identifying Local Food-based Opportunities in Casper, WY
<b>Grant Agreement Number:</b> <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-LFPPX-WY-0192
<b>Year Grant was Awarded:</b>	2014
<b>Project City/State:</b>	Casper, WY
<b>Total Awarded Budget:</b>	\$24,554

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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**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.**

**1. Goal/Objective 1:** Assess Wyoming’s food production.

- **Progress Made:** We developed and opened surveys for all local food producers in Wyoming to gather and assess the local food production in Wyoming. We received 65 surveys from local producers, 56 of whom completed it, and 55 of whom are interested in the food hub. The survey addresses products produced, quantity, acreage, and interest level in a food hub. The interested respondents included 34 vegetable, 11 fruit, 17 eggs, 14 beef, 15 poultry, 7 pork, and 7 lamb producers. Total specialty crop acreage equaled 310 acres. Animal husbandry counts were 3800 chickens, 2000 heads cattle, 1800 laying hens, 780 lambs and 300 hogs. Survey respondents key needs include: farm identification, transportation logistics, farm pick up, liability insurance, support with wholesale brokerage, and product cooling and cold storage.
- **Impact on Community:** The final analysis revealed significant interest among producers engaged (55 interested producers identified), who have moderate volume of supply and opportunity for production expansion. Many fruit and vegetable producers have invested in season extension. There is high product alignment among producers and buyers. These findings suggest there adequate supply, interest, and potential for the development of the local food system in Wyoming.

**2. Goal/Objective 2:** Identify Wyoming local food supply chain infrastructure.

- **Progress Made:** The survey instrument addresses current infrastructure and infrastructure gaps. Growers are frustrated with the lack of commercial processing facilities in Wyoming. Survey responses suggested infrastructure gaps they would like to see closed, including cold storage, frozen storage (particularly for proteins), meat and produce processing facility, tannery (for animal hides), malting facility, and a mill (for brewing/breads). There are 19 state inspected meat processing facilities in Wyoming and zero USDA-inspected facilities.
- **Impact on Community:** The final recommendations and report will provide the community with comprehensive information on Wyoming’s local food landscape and opportunities. Primary research identified existing infrastructure across Wyoming that could be leveraged by a food hub, enabling the hub to minimize capital investment requirements. There is potential for the development of a USDA inspected processing facility whose output could be sold and distributed to neighboring states which have significantly larger population and demand. A more promising potential strategy that emerged from the study is the potential to establish a cooperative inspection service in Wyoming that the USDA could approve as equivalent to its own inspection. Wyoming has highly committed infrastructure partners who are passionate about a Casper food hub’s mission and potential serving as a foundation for the development of a local food system in Wyoming.

3. **Goal/Objective 3:** Identify challenges and barriers to local food market entry.

- **Progress Made:** Through our survey and interview with producers and buyers, we have gathered data on perceived barriers to local food market entry. Interested growers are most interested in a food hub with the features including farm-identified sales, locally owned and operated hub, sales and marketing assistance for farmers, farm pick-up and transportation, liability insurance for farms, cost assistance for GAP certification, cold chain and traceability of all aggregated products, and cooling/freezer storage capacity. Producers indicated labor, infrastructure costs, and sales limitations as the biggest barriers to pursuing or expanding season extension strategies. The major obstacles, needs, and challenges for wholesale buyers to purchase local food include food safety, liability and traceability, Delivery to warehouse, consistent supply, high quality, and an agent that provides marketing and branding support.
- **Impact on Community:** The final recommendations and report indicated that the uncovered challenges that should be better understood and addressed before investing significant time and resources in a food hub development project. These barriers need to be addressed and solutions identified as Wyoming moves forward with its local food system.

4. **Goal/Objective 4:** Assess and quantify Wyoming's local food demand.

- **Progress Made:** The project team developed and distributed a buyer survey to assess and quantify the local food demand in the Casper area and around Wyoming. We have received 13 surveys from buyers throughout the study. Five interested buyers are educational institutions, three are restaurants, two are direct to consumer distributors, one is a hospital and one is a retail wholesale grocery store. Three interested buyers are currently purchasing some local produce; six do not. Interested buyers currently purchase three percent of their produce locally. Interested buyers indicate that six percent of their produce is organic which was largely driven by one buyer for whom 80-90% of produce purchased is organic. Annual spend totaling \$4.3 million for whole produce \$600,000 for processed produce, \$2.3 million for proteins, and \$340,000 for grain.
- **Impact on Community:** The final analysis revealed significant demand for local food in Casper and Wyoming. A food hub would expand availability of healthy local food, both by selling to institutions serving lower income Casper residents and through food donations.

**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, 20\_\_). Include further explanation if necessary.**

- The team collected surveys from 65 surveys from local producers, 56 of whom completed it, and 55 of whom are interested in the food hub. We have received 13 surveys from buyers throughout the study. If a food hub were developed, these respondents would all be potential beneficiaries, including the six identified communities involved.
- **Number of direct jobs created:** A food hub would create direct jobs through its own employment. A small food hub would likely require 1 to 2 FTE staff members, including a general manager/sales manager, a production/warehouse manager, and an hourly driver.

- **Number of jobs retained:** A food hub would provide market opportunity for many of the small and mid-sized farmers in Wyoming. Developing the local food system would benefit these producers and retained many of the jobs needed for their operation.
- **Number of indirect jobs created:** Local food hubs also generate indirect employment by spurring expanded local food production. Season extension requires workers early and late in the growing season. According to a 2010 University of Wisconsin-Madison study, 2.2 jobs are created for every \$100,000 in local food sales.<sup>1</sup> Twenty-six million dollars (\$26M) in unmet demand for local farm products have been identified in the Casper metropolitan area.<sup>2</sup> A food hub that eventually meets this unmet demand would indirectly generate an additional 572 harvest, post-harvest and distribution-related jobs, most supporting growers in the state.
- **Number of markets expanded:** Throughout the study, six communities emerged as potential “sub-hubs” and markets for local food, though Casper has the highest demand and will serve as the keystone market for development of the local food system.
- **Number of new markets established:** The identified communities in Wyoming all currently operate a local farmers’ market. Our efforts would expand these markets beyond direct-to-consumer to wholesale channels.

**Market sales increased by \$0 and increased by 0%.**

- **Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project:** We have received surveys from 65 producers in Wyoming. 55 of whom are interested in a food hub. We have also conducted in-depth interviews with two other producers.

**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?**

- Through the study outreach, we have received attention in other markets in and around low income/low access populations interested in developing their local food system. Interested Wyoming communities including: Cody, Lovell, Sheridan, Laramie, and Cheyenne. We also have received interest from businesses supplying value-added products.

**Discuss your community partnerships.**

- i. Who are your community partners?

Our community partners include the following organizations:

- a. Prevention Management Organization of Wyoming – Natrona County Office
- b. City of Casper
- c. Wyoming Survey Analysis Center
- d. Wyoming Business Council – Agribusiness Department
- e. Wyoming Department of Agriculture
- f. Casper Community Greenhouse Project
- g. Wyoming Medical Center
- h. Triple Crown Commodities

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<sup>1</sup> (IFM 2010)

<sup>2</sup> (MarketSizer 2015)

- i. Lovell, Inc.
- j. Western Dairy Association

ii. **How have they contributed to the results you've already achieved?**

- These organizations have assisted in our survey outreach to producers and buyers in Wyoming, have provided information on local food infrastructure, and have positioned themselves to expand our local food system efforts into their businesses and communities.

iii. **How will they contribute to future results?**

- Our community partners will continue to assist our efforts in expanding the local food system in Wyoming through funding, collaboration, and future outreach.

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

- We worked in collaboration with New Venture Advisors, LLC (NVA). NVA worked closely with our project team to strategically plan and execute the currently study. NVA co-presented at our initial stakeholder meeting. NVA created the survey tool and currently maintains the data from our producer and buyer surveys. NVA also assists in project management and survey outreach for the study, as well as data analysis and report creation.

5. **Have you publicized any results yet?** Yes, the results have been published.

i. **If yes, how did you publicize the results?**

- a. Results were published in print and were published online via our community partner, Casper Community Greenhouse Project.

ii. **To whom did you publicize the results?**

- a. Results were published in print for all survey respondents and stakeholders involved in the study and are available online for all website visitors.

iii. **How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach?**

- a. The study reached 65 producers, 16 buyers, and 10 organizations. In total the project reached 91 stakeholders.

\*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).

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

Yes, producer/buyer and stakeholder feedback was gathered.

iv. **If so, how did you collect the information?**

a.. Feedback was formally gathered through survey outreach to producers and buyers in Wyoming and an initial stakeholder meeting held Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015. We have received informal feedback through phone interviews and stakeholder forums.

v. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?

“Wyoming is a great place for local food. Local food movement helps bring more accountability for our food.”

“This (project) would be cool but at what price? And what is grown here in Wyoming? What is your definition of local?”

“...would be nice to have a fresh pack facility to wash and process produce so it’s ready to use.”

“Wish I had more storage...”

“We’d love to participate!”

“A short growing season is our biggest challenge for expansion.”

“...if we are to size up to meet demand we need more labor, better infrastructure and on-farm (or co-op) processing capability.”

“Most wholesale prices are not high enough to keep small, local farms profitable.”

“Price is important. Would increase production if markets are there.”

“We still have expansion in our current markets. Working on expanding our growing season through the use of greenhouses.”

“CHS regulations discourage local marketing.”

“Cannot increase production without willing labor”

“Most wholesale prices are not high enough to keep small, local farms profitable.”

“We are not concerned with the safety of the food we organically raise, but the burden of the Food Safety Act and its regulation. “

“We are able to sell everything we grow now in local market. But if we are to size up to meet demand we need more labor, better infrastructure and on farm (or co-op) processing capability. Otherwise I don't think the income from raw produce will cover labor costs (in Riverton WY).”

“I could increase production. May not be worth it if hub price is not sufficient to cover costs.”

“I feel Wyoming meat products are extremely high quality and very marketable to consumers.”

“We have been selling a few beef locally for many years and have not been able to go to the next level of local small groceries or restaurants. We believe we have a delicious, healthy product to which more people should have access.”

**Budget Summary:**

Total amount spent during reporting period

Personnel:	\$6,600
Contractual:	\$26,542
Equipment Purchases:	\$0
Travel:	\$773.40
Supplies:	\$600
Other:	\$700
Indirect Costs:	\$0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$34,915.40</b>

Matching Funds

Personnel:	\$6,600.00 (440 hours @ \$15 per hour)
Contractual:	\$1,998
Equipment Purchases:	\$0
Travel:	\$773.40
Supplies:	\$600
Other:	\$700.00
Indirect Costs:	\$0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$10,671.40</b>

vi. **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:

vii. **Did the project generate any income?**

The project did not generate income during this period.

**Lessons Learned:** 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).

- **Positives** – There is significant interest in food hub development across the state – including Cheyenne, Big Horn Basin and Powder River Basin. Planning groups leading these efforts were open to collaboration and recognized the importance of coordination among statewide efforts, so clusters can offset each other’s gaps in either supply or demand.
- **Negatives** – Producer and buyer outreach was limited. An email survey was the main outreach channel, with in person distribution at local conferences and meetings. As information about the project spread, more stakeholders and interested parties emerged throughout the state, but many after the survey closed. This study was also limited in its access to primary research across the state; particularly with respect to its ability to access buyers outside of Casper. This resulted in very low identified demand in all clusters besides Casper.

- i. **If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:** N/A
- ii. **Describe any lessons learned in the administration of the project that might be helpful for others who would want to implement a similar project:**

Forming a motivated stakeholder team and having dedicated local team members is crucial in initial outreach and networking efforts.

**Future Work:** 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.

Wyoming proves to be a unique landscape for local food development in rural America. Farms and ranches scattered throughout the state lack the tools and equipment to reach local markets. From our previous results, a successful state-wide food hub network would lead to increased access to fresh, locally grown produce and a culture of health conscious, local eating. Food hub and broader food systems development promotes diversification of the local economy and enables targeted investment to support new local food businesses. We will continue this study and expand the scope to understand the production, wholesale demand, and existing infrastructure for local food in each of Wyoming’s identified cluster areas that emerged. This research will build up the previous study that centered on the Casper cluster area. This study will expand the scope and understanding of Wyoming’s producers, buyers and food systems stakeholders across the state. The project will begin in October 2015 and research will conclude March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016. This type development will help prepare each cluster for investment in both upstream and downstream opportunities in the local food supply chain. Exploring food hub clusters in Wyoming could serve as a model for a distributed local food system in rural America.

**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?**

The trends, opportunities, and challenges evaluated as part of this Community Food Assessment indicate initial potential for (1) the successful development of a robust food hub in Casper and (2) a possible statewide food hub network. Demand in Casper is strong, providing initial support for a Casper food hub that can source from Casper and other clusters. Because identified supply in the Casper cluster is relatively limited, the food hub's access to supply would be significantly strengthened through the development of a statewide network of hubs that have access to regions of the state with a larger base of agricultural production.

Such initiatives would likely result in public health and economic benefits for the entire state. However, the research also suggested that leaders should first take steps to understand and address certain obstacles related to the demand and supply landscape in order to lay a foundation for success. The core team is proposing two separate sets of recommendations.

**Casper Metropolitan Area**

The core team makes the following recommendations regarding food hub development in Casper, WY, based on data gathered from the surveys, interviews, grower-buyer meeting and secondary research:

**Recommendation 1: Further develop a food business network that serves growers and buyers in and around the Casper cluster**

An important early step will be to solidify commitments from buyers who have expressed interest and locate new buyers. Additionally, given the limited volume of supply identified within the Casper cluster, the team should seek to expand fruit and vegetable production within the Casper cluster, by identifying additional supply sources and pursuing technical assistance to ensure that growers can meet buyers' food safety requirements. Three strategies for expanding the base of growers that a Casper food hub can access include:

1. Conducting additional on the ground research to identify growers who did not emerge from the study research efforts.
2. Working with growers already identified in the Casper cluster to expand and diversify their production.
3. Engaging growers in the Cheyenne and Powder River Basin cluster that can access Casper relatively easily.

The team should aim to identify two or three additional vegetable growers with a total of 50 acres of production, bringing the total production among interested produce growers to 113 acres. If a Casper food hub could have access to 25-30 acres of this production, it would likely be well positioned to generate at least \$400,000 in annual revenue from produce sales (based on national averages with respect to yield per acre, and average price per pound of produce). This would likely be a solid starting point for the development of a small physical food hub.

## **Recommendation 2: Assess the long-term financial profitability of a Casper Food Hub**

The core team recommends moving forward with the next phase of research. This phase – **business & technical analysis** – will assess the recommended capacity (i.e. facility square footage) and potential financial profitability of a Casper food hub.

It is important to note that establishing a Casper food hub may be critical even if such a stand-alone hub is not by itself profitable. *The Casper food hub can serve as the anchor hub that will enable subsequent development of food hub clusters across the state.*

## **Recommendation 3: Develop Casper cluster area technical assistance services, marketing and educational campaigns**

The core team also recommends launching a number of initiatives and direct service programs in the Casper area that help expand demand for local farm products and improve growers' ability to produce high quality, food safe, wholesale ready products.

Recommended initiatives focused on spurring additional demand for local farm products include:

- Implementing USDA Farm to School Programs in Casper in order to expand K-12 school's participation in local purchasing efforts. K-12 schools can be valuable anchor buyers. Despite the fact that they are price sensitive, they often provide hubs with consistency and volume levels that other wholesale buyers cannot offer. Natrona County Schools expressed no interest in working with a Casper food hub because they are currently only incentivized to minimize their costs. However; they may make this more of a priority if they received funding through the USDA's Farm to School Program that is specifically allocated to local food purchasing.
- Collaborating with buyers and local nonprofit organizations in running end consumer education programs to encourage more local, healthy food consumption. This may include cooking education programs, SNAP education initiatives, and healthy eating workshops.

Recommended initiatives focused on preparing growers for wholesale include:

- Coordinating wholesale success training workshops that teach growers about post-harvest cooling and handling, cold storage, USDA grading and packing standards, and cold supply chain management. Additional group training programs might focus on Good Agricultural Practices certification and USDA organic certification.
- Developing and coordinating financial and technical assistance to growers, to help them gain access to capital to support production expansion.
- Promoting and education about season extension expansion, to help more growers increase their product availability during off season months when demand for local significantly outstrips supply. Season extension strategies include high tunnel development, greenhouse development and investing in the production of storage crops that can be stored and sold during the winter months.
- Encouraging collaborative food processing efforts, by working with buyers, growers, associations, and public entities to promote innovative processing strategies. For example, several K-12 schools and food banks purchase large volumes of produce during the summer, process it in house, and store it for use during the year.