

FY 2014

\$99,994 to the CSU Chico Research Foundation, Chico, CA, to make fresh produce, cooking demonstrations, and food tastings available to students, staff, and community members at farm stands in Colusa County, CA.

Final Report

**Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)
Final Performance Report**

The final performance report summarizes the outcome of your FMPP award objectives. As stated in the FMPP Terms and Conditions, you will not be eligible for future FMPP or Local Food 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 FMPP 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 FMPP staff to avoid delays:

FMPP Phone: 202-690-4152; Email: USDAFMPPQuestions@ams.usda.gov; Fax: 202-690-4152

Should you need to mail your documents via hard copy, contact FMPP staff to obtain mailing instructions.

Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	September 30, 2014 – September 29, 2016
Authorized Representative Name:	Kristin Gruneisen
Authorized Representative Phone:	(530) 898-6476
Authorized Representative Email:	kgruneisen@csuchico.edu
Recipient Organization Name:	The Center for Healthy Communities (Formerly the Center for Nutrition and Activity Promotion)
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	School Farm Stand Pilot Project
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-FMPPX-CA-0027
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Chico, CA
Total Awarded Budget:	\$99,994

FMPP 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 FMPP 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: By August 31, 2016, at least 500 children, families, school staff and/or community members in a low income, low access region will have increased access to high-quality, local produce from at least 16 School Farm Stand markets each year.
 - a. Progress Made: Throughout the grant period (September 2014 – September 2016) 34 Farm Stands were hosted on 3 different school campuses. Over 1000 students and 80 teachers and staff were impacted, in addition to many parents, families and community members.
 - b. Impact on Community: At each of the Farm Stands, students, parents, staff and community members had the opportunity to purchase fresh, in-season produce from farms around the community. Each Farm Stand also featured a free sample of a produce item, along with the recipe for the tasting if it was a prepared item. Families could also access CalFresh information to help sign up to receive benefits. These pieces combined to provide education and increased access to high-quality, local produce in the community.
 - ii. Goal/Objective 2: By August 31, 2016, at least 4 producers (farms/CSAs) will provide produce to the School Farm Stand Pilot Project to increase their exposure/marketability and sales within the low-income, rural community.
 - a. Progress Made: Throughout the grand period, 24 local farms provided produce for the 34 Farm Stands. At each Farm Stand, one producer/farm was featured on fliers and marketing materials, giving 9 local farmers extra exposure in the community.
 - b. Impact on Community: The community gained knowledge about local growers and what is seasonally available. The growers were marketed to a new group of potential customers, including families and school food service.
 - iii. Goal/Objective 3: By August 31, 2016, at least 4 successful partnerships among local producers (farms/CSAs), school district staff (e.g. foodservice director and staff, teachers, etc.) and community organizations will develop each year in order to strengthen the regional food system.
 - a. Progress Made: Throughout the grant period, partnerships were developed between at least 8 local producers, schools and non-profits.
 - b. Impact on Community: The relationships between The Center for Healthy Communities (CHC), Colusa Unified School District, FoodCorps, the North Valley Food Hub, and the Colusa Indian Community Council were strengthened over the course of this project. All of these entities were woven into the local food system via the relationships with each other and with local producers, resulting in a stronger local food network.
 - iv. Goal/Objective 4: By August 31, 2016, at least 16 fruit and/or vegetable tastings and/or cooking demonstrations will be provided at the School Farm Stand each year to increase healthy behaviors within the school and home environments.
 - a. Progress Made: Throughout the grant period, 34 fruit and/or vegetable tastings and 21 cooking demonstrations were provided at the Farm Stands.

b. Impact on Community: Students and parents tasted produce that they may have not tried before and brought home recipe cards and produce to prepare the tastings at home. Families and students learned what produce is available in season. Kids motivated parents to purchase produce that they liked.

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: 2
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: 0
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: 0
 - iv. Number of markets expanded: 0
 - v. Number of new markets established: 3
 - vi. Market sales increased by \$insignificant and increased by insignificant %.
 - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 24
 - a. Percent Increase: unknown
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?

This project expanded the customer base for local produce sales by bringing produce from surrounding communities into a low income/low access community. By setting up Farm Stands on school campuses, this project was able to reach families that previously had very little access to fresh produce, in terms of the locations of grocery stores and markets and the common lack of transportation in the community. Bringing local produce into this community also created an awareness and familiarity of farms and producers in the area, creating more potential customers for local farms.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.
 - i. Who are your community partners?

Through this project, CHC collaborated with several community partners, including: FoodCorps, The North Valley Food Hub, Colusa Unified School District, including Burchfield Primary School, Egling Middle School, and the Colusa Unified School District Food Service, Colusa Indian Community Council, and Hand-In-Hand Learning Center.
 - ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the FMPP project?

These partnerships provided invaluable support and collaborative energy to this project. The collaboration with Colusa Unified School District allowed us to host Farm Stands on the campus of two schools and to also connect with the food service staff and administration to help plan and promote the project. The North Valley Food Hub assisted in connecting this project with local farms to supply produce for the Farm Stands. Working with FoodCorps allowed the project to utilize the time and energy of a highly skilled and motivated volunteer at each of the Farm Stands. The partnership with the Colusa Indian Community Council and Hand-In-Hand Learning Center provided a Farm Stand site within the Indian community and allowed this project to further its reach to a more diverse population. Overall, these partnerships provided a supportive network to assist in providing access to local produce in this community.
 - iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMPP grant?

The FoodCorps Service Member in this community will continue to focus on farm-to-school activities by maintaining school gardens, teaching garden-based nutrition education lessons, and eventually using produce from these school gardens to host an after-school Farm Stand with students. Participating schools will continue to implement farm-to-school activities by incorporating existing school gardens into their curriculum and by continuing to feature local fruits and vegetables into the school lunch program. CHC will make available the Farm Stand promotional banner and equipment to support partnering organizations who want to conduct Farm Stands at schools.

5. Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the FMPP project?

No, we have not used contractors to conduct the work for this project.

6. Have you publicized any results yet?*

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

Results were published in several ways:

- The graduate student assisting with this project published a defense of her research
- A “Farm Stand Toolkit” was created (attached)
- An article was published in North State Parent Magazine (<http://northstateparent.com/familyresources/healthy-food-resources/farm-stands-schools-local-public-school-promotes-fresh-produce-healthy-food-choices-can/>)
- An article was posted on the California Farm to School Network Blog (<http://www.cafarmtoschool.org/farm-stands-and-schools-how-to-successfully-sell-produce-to-elementary-students/>)
- North State Public Radio featured this project in a radio story <http://myspr.org/post/farm-stand-brings-healthy-local-food-colusa-school>

- ii. To whom did you publicize the results?

Graduate students and professors at California State University, Chico were able to review the research done by the graduate student and several were in attendance at her defense presentation. The “Farm Stand Toolkit” will be distributed to the participating schools, the staff of Center for Healthy Communities (CHC) and published on the CHC website.

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

The distribution for North State Parent magazine reaches approximately 18,000 people. The North State Public Radio listening area spans over 12 counties in Northern California. The California Farm to School Network covers the entire state of California, with 8 specified regions, reaching educators, farmers, non-profits, and distributors throughout the state.

*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?

The graduate student participating in this project collected data on several areas relating to this project. She use pre and post surveys with students and parents at participating schools, a hedonic tasting chart at the Farm Stand, sales data from each Farm Stand, and a focus group to collect data.

ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?

The graduate student found several interesting trends in her research, although did not find significant results relating to student's fruit and vegetable preferences. She did determine:

- Students prefer fruits over vegetables
- Many students used the recipe cards provided to make healthy snacks at home
- 30% of students purchased produce from the Farm Stand
- 73% would purchase at the Farm Stand if it were still available
- The most popular items at the Farm Stand were kiwi and strawberries

8. Budget Summary:

i. As part of the FMPP 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?

This project did not generate any income. Money that was made at a Farm Stand was then used to purchase produce for the next Farm Stand, resulting in a balance of expenses and income at the end of the grant period.

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. 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).

- Aligning our project with another farm-to-school initiative proved to be a very effective way to increase participation. Students were more engaged after seeing the same produce item in their classroom through the Harvest of the Month program and as a free sample at the Farm Stand.
- We quickly learned that students wanted to purchase easy-to-eat, after school snacks like bags of strawberries, almonds, or snap peas. These were also easy for parents to buy for their children to snack on in the car on the way home from school. Setting easy prices (like \$1 for a bag of strawberries) made it simple and affordable for students and parents to purchase fresh produce after school.
- We experimented with the time of the Farm Stand and learned that 30 minutes before to 30 minutes after school let out was ideal for reaching and engaging the most students, families and staff. Staying open for the duration of the after school program (3 hours) did not significantly increase participation or sales at the Farm Stand.
- We used multiple avenues to promote the Farm Stand: school calendar, school website, newsletters to parents, marquee on campus, fliers around school and

at the Farm Stand and social media. The school was willing to help promote and this led to more participation.

- We tried several routes to procure the produce for the Farm Stand, eventually finding the most success at a local weekly Farmers' Market. This provided the most diverse selection of produce, as well as an efficient and convenient way to purchase a large quantity in one trip. Our first method, buying through a local Food Hub, was convenient (online purchasing, delivery to one location), but did not provide the diversity in produce that we were looking for and was not cost effective, considering the small quantities of produce required for each Farm Stand. We also tried purchasing through a local CSA farm, buying 2 CSA boxes to supply one Farm Stand. This provided diversity and convenience, but since we were not able to choose what produce was in the boxes, we did not have success in selling some of the more unfamiliar items.
 - While the initial goal of the project was to provide fresh, local produce for families in the community to buy, the greatest success came in the tastings and cooking demonstrations that we offered. These free samples drew in students and parents and provided an opportunity for both to try something new. Often parents would take a recipe card home and sometimes would purchase the ingredients right from the Farm Stand. Students were excited to connect the produce from the tasting to the produce they tasted in the classroom through the Harvest of the Month program.
- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:
Fostering a stronger, more inclusive partnership with the school administration would have been greatly beneficial in creating success with this project. Having an administration willing to participate and promote the project, and ultimately adopt the project, would have allowed more reach and overall benefit of the project.
 - 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:
Even when working with a relatively low budget, it is essential to have a solid accounting system in place. Tracking purchases, sales, receipts, and data from each Farm Stand is key to learning what is working and what could be improved.

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 current FoodCorps Service Member associated with CHC will be continuing the efforts of this project in two local elementary schools. She will be creating a full-circle school garden experience by maintaining school gardens with students, planting and tending to vegetables throughout the year and teaching nutrition education in the garden. When crops are ready to be harvested, she will use the Farm Stand model and the participation of students to host Farm Stands on campus, featuring the produce that was grown and harvested by the students. In addition, CHC will make available the Farm

Stand promotional banner and equipment to support partnering organizations in the region who want to conduct Farm Stands at schools.

- 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?
To ensure that future Farm Stand projects are successful, it is essential to build strong relationships with participating schools and create a sense of ownership in the school environment. Collaborating with invested teachers, parents, or volunteers will increase participation and enthusiasm around the project, increasing the chances of success and sustainability. This project can serve as a basic foundation for a Farm Stand project and be tailored to fit the unique needs of each community.

FARM STAND



Center for
Healthy Communities
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO

Lessons Learned from a School
Farm Stand Pilot Project

Working Towards a Healthy School Food Environment

As studies continue to show that childhood obesity is increasing in our country, schools across the nation are incorporating farm-to-school activities into their curriculum. Planting school gardens, introducing new fruits and vegetables through a Harvest of the Month program, and adding salad bars to the cafeteria are all contributing to a more healthful school food environment. In an effort to connect these school activities to the home and to the larger community, The Center for Healthy Communities developed a School Farm Stand Pilot Project. Using this booklet as a basic guide, we hope more communities can incorporate Farm Stands into their healthy school curriculum.

Contents

- Who: a look at the participants and players
- What: a description of the Farm Stand project
- When: a timeline of key moments
- Where: a picture of the community
- Why: a discussion of food access
- How: a detailed account of the process
- Lessons Learned: tips for future projects



Who

The USDA

This project was funded by a Farmers' Market Promotion Program (FMPP) grant through the USDA. The purpose of the Farmers' Market Promotion Program is to increase domestic consumption of, and access to, locally and regionally produced agricultural products, and to develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets.



The Center for Healthy Communities

The Center for Healthy Communities (CHC) is a leader in nutrition education, food security and physical activity programs and policies addressing the needs of diverse populations locally, regionally, and internationally. CHC led this project, providing the infrastructure, personnel and vision.



**Center for
Healthy Communities**

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO

Who (cont'd)

Colusa Unified School District

Colusa Unified School District housed the activities of this project, providing locations to host the Farm Stands at two campuses in the district: George T. Egling Middle School and James P. Burchfield Primary School. Colusa's Food Service director also contributed input and direction towards this project.



FoodCorps

FoodCorps is a national non-profit that serves the community food system by teaching kids about healthy food, building school gardens, and changing the school food environment. This Farm Stand project was assisted by FoodCorps Service Members whose participation increased the connection with the schools and students we worked with.



What

A small produce stand was set up on the school campus to sell fresh, seasonal, local fruits and vegetables to parents, students, staff, and the community. Along with produce for sale, each Farm Stand featured a free tasting of a seasonal produce item (eg: watermelon slices) and information about the CalFresh benefits program.



When

The Farm Stand project began in February of 2015 and continued through August of 2016. Farm Stands were set up during the after-school hours (year one: 2:30 pm to 5:30 pm, year two: 1:45 pm to 2:45 pm), twice per month throughout the school year. During the summer, Farm Stands were open once per week while summer school was in session. This provided a convenient time for parents to purchase produce for their families and allowed for consistency throughout the school year.



Where



Colusa County, a rural, Northern California county with a population of 21,674 has one of the highest rates of childhood obesity in the state of California and ranks first in the state in unemployment.

This community is rich in agriculture and specialty crops, however, there is a significant lack of full-service grocery stores and markets providing fresh fruits and vegetables.

This Farm Stand project focused efforts in the primary and middle schools in Colusa County. James P. Burchfield Primary school has an enrollment of 479 students, in grades K through 3, with 73.5% of those students identifying as Hispanic/Latino. George T. Egling Middle School has an enrollment of 527 students, in grades 4 through 8, with 69.3% of students identifying as Hispanic/Latino.

Why - The Socioeconomic Environment

Colusa County ranks first in the state with a current unemployment rate of 24.2%, significantly higher than the California state average of 8.4%. 15.2% of the population lives below the poverty line, and 1,820 residents receive CalFresh benefits. (State of California, 2010) At George T. Egling Middle School, 60.6% of students qualify for free or reduced meals. (California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System, 2013) In 2010, 45.7% of Colusa County's children were overweight or obese, according to research by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. This is one of the highest rates in California, where the state average is 31%.

Why – Food Access

Limited access to fresh, nutritious foods, especially fruits and vegetables, is one factor that contributes to this high rate of obesity. This limitation can be attributed to a lack of both physical and financial access. The geographical area is rich in agriculture and specialty crops, however, there is a significant lack of full-service grocery stores providing fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as limited access to farmers' markets in terms of location and availability of transportation. This lack of access to nutritious food likely affects the overall health of the community and contributes to the high obesity rate in Colusa County. Addressing the lack of access to fresh fruits and vegetables is one way to impact the high rates of childhood obesity in Colusa County.

How

Tastings

Each week, the FMPP team chose a tasting to provide at the Farm Stand. This tasting corresponded to the Harvest of the Month program that was active in Colusa School District. For example, the Harvest of the Month item for February was carrots, so the tasting offered during the first week of February was carrots with a hummus dip. Tasting supplies were purchased, then prepared on-site at the Farm Stand. Students, staff and families were offered a free sample, along with a recipe card so they could prepare the item at home. Students used a sticker to vote on the tasting.



How

Produce for Sale

Each week the Farm Stand Coordinator purchased local produce from area farmers. Several procurement methods were tried, including using a local Food Hub, a CSA program, and purchasing from a weekly Farmers' Market. The Farmers' Market method proved to be the most efficient as it provided a more diverse selection and the ability to make one trip to purchase produce. The produce was then displayed at the Farm Stand and sold to staff and families at cost, or less.



Lessons Learned

Secure Support from the School

Support from school administration and staff is invaluable, including superintendent, principal, school board, food services director, janitor/maintenance staff, and teachers. These people will be necessary in planning, executing and troubleshooting the project. Consider fostering involvement either by creating a farm stand club or partnering with teachers who are interested in becoming a classroom stakeholder. When students participate in the project, parents are more likely to participate as well. Organize groups of students to be in charge of different parts of the farm stand (Finance Team, Advertising Crew, Farm Stand Hospitality and Tastings Squad). This could be a perfect project for an after-school program!

Lessons Learned

Know What Sells

Pay attention to what the community is purchasing. We found that during the after school hours, students wanted quick, easy snacks before their activities began. They loved to buy small bags of strawberries, almonds and snap peas or easy-to-eat fruit like apples and kiwi. Parents were also interested in these quick snacks for their kids to eat on the way home.





Lessons Learned

Set Easy Prices

Keep pricing simple and affordable by breaking things into smaller portions. Sell a bag of strawberries for \$1 or an apple for \$.50. Often students have some change in their backpack or parents will gladly hand their kid \$1 for a healthy snack.

Lessons Learned

Align With Another Program

Multiple exposures to fruits and vegetables has been shown to increase the likelihood that a child will eat fruits and vegetables. When students see the same produce in the cafeteria, in the classroom with the Harvest of the Month Program, and after school at the Farm Stand, they are more likely to participate and choose more healthful options. We coordinated with the Harvest of the Month program, so students saw the same produce from the same farmer multiple times per month. They loved being able to recognize “Matthew’s carrots” or “the kiwi from Debbie!”



Lessons Learned

Promote, Promote, Promote!

Promote your Farm Stand as much and as often as possible. Put the dates on the school calendar, on the school's website, in newsletters to parents, on the marquee outside, in local newspapers and on fliers at the Farm Stand. Use social media to remind the community and to share pictures and stories!

FARM STAND

FRESH PRODUCE FOR SALE FROM LOCAL FARMERS

Students, Families and Staff (all are welcome)



Cooking Demonstrations • Take Home Recipes
Free Fruit & Vegetable Tasting • CalFresh Information

August 3, 10, 17, & 24 • 4:30pm-5:30pm



Center for
Healthy Communities
University of California - Davis

Lessons Learned

Promote SNAP Benefits

Farm Stands are a great platform to provide information about the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Provide a flier with information that families can take home with their produce purchase.

Procure Wisely!

Consider purchasing produce through a local CSA or buying produce at the end of a Farmers' Market that may go to waste. Explore the option of using a local Food Hub or purchasing directly from farmers in the community for affordable, fresh produce.

In Summary

School Farm Stands have the potential to be a simple project that contributes to a healthy school food environment, however, in order to be sustainable, school ownership is essential. Using this basic Farm Stand model, schools and communities could make easy adjustments to be most effective in their unique situations.

