2014 Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)
Final Performance Report
White Rock Local Market/ Good Local Markets
Growing Customers and Vendors at Vickery Meadow Local Market

Report Date Range: *(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)*	*September 30, 2014-September 29, 2016*
Authorized Representative Name:	Sarah Perry
Authorized Representative Phone:	214-797-4989
Authorized Representative Email:	sarah@goodlocalmarkets.org
Recipient Organization Name:	White Rock Local Market/ Good Local Markets
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Growing Customers and Vendors at Vickery Meadows Local Market
Grant Agreement Number: *(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)*	14-FMPPX-TX-0163
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Dallas, Texas
Total Awarded Budget:	78,565

FMPP staff may contact you to follow up for long-term success stories. Who may we contact?
X 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.

Final Report Summary - "Growing Customers and Vendors at Vickery Meadow Local Market"

"Growing Customers and Vendors at Vickery Meadow Local Market" created a weekly farmers market accepting SNAP benefits in the ethnically diverse and low-income Vickery Meadow neighborhood of Dallas, Texas. The project brought healthy food to new customers, while developing new direct-to-consumer opportunities for urban and rural producers. We included food artisans and urban growers from the Vickery Meadow immigrant community, and partnered with local non-profits to reach out to customers in this community.

During the 2015 and 2016 market seasons, Good Local Markets partnered with Southern Methodist University's Center on Research and Evaluation (CORE) to track our goals and objectives, to collect data, and to prepare detailed reports on outcomes. A comprehensive report on Good Local Markets' activities and our goals related to the 2014 FMPP Award is an addendum to this report. We are excited to continue the evaluation work beyond this 2-year cycle, and strengthen our organization as we work to have a greater positive impact on the communities we serve.

Our evaluation through CORE shows that customers report consuming more fruits and vegetables as a result of the 2014 FMPP Award and the Vickery Meadow Market, and that farmers successfully created new customers and increased revenue. We have had many accomplishments – among them the recruitment of strong, successful farmers at the Vickery Meadow location and our anchor market Lakeside, and the creation of a strong organization with local outreach and excellent data tracking. In this report and in the following CORE Report for Good Local Markets, we outline the many benefits from the project and the many lessons we have learned from it.

1. **Goals/ Objectives of project:**
    i. **Goal/Objective 1**: Create a new weekly farmers market in the Vickery Meadow neighborhood of Dallas, for a March to December market season with 30 vendors including at least 15 farmers/ growers each market, establishing a benchmark of $400 revenue per vendor, per market or $12,000 per market day.
        a. **Progress Made:** Goal #1 was effectively met with a successful two seasons of the producer-only Vickery Meadow Market. Results indicate that the goal of 30 or more vendors per market was met in both 2015 and 2016. The average number of agricultural vendors increased from 2015 to 2016, though was still shy of the goal of 15 agricultural vendors per market. We are pleased with the ratio of total vendors to agricultural vendors, resulting in the greatest percentage of over-all sales.

To better gage the success of our farmers markets, we have compared vendor revenue at each location – Lakeside (LS) and Vickery Meadow (VM). This benchmark for revenue was determined by a voluntary Vendor Revenue Survey conducted each market day throughout the year. In 2015, we established $389 as a benchmark for average vendor revenue earned each market day for both locations. In 2016, the average for both market locations rose slightly to $393.36. Revenue increased for Lakeside to $417.55 average per vendor, but decreased to $281.93 per vendor for Vickery Meadow. In fact, as the season progressed vendor revenue at Vickery Meadow decreased even further, but rose at Lakeside. While vendor sales fell below our target, we did establish a farmers market opportunity where agricultural vendors made up over half of total sales for each day and for the year (55.5%). We use the outcomes of our evaluations and the benchmarks we set in 2015/16, to determine how to adjust our goals and/or our activities going forward.

b. **Impact on Community:** The Vickery Meadow Market has been generally well received by customers and vendors. The location took on the character of the Vickery Meadow neighborhood and included many vendors from the community who hail from around the world. We added a walkable, vibrant community resource to an area traditionally made for cars. The Vickery Meadow Market also allowed many vendors to incubate their small businesses, creating a strong marketing stream simply by being in the market. Customers reported in surveys that their consumption of fruits and vegetables increased as a result of shopping at the market. Conversely, when we compare traffic flow, customer attendance, and vendor attendance and revenue, to our other locations, we see that the Vickery Meadow location has been challenged. Compared to our more vibrant Lakeside Market, vendors were dissatisfied with customer traffic and sales, and our marketing efforts seemed to have little effect. The location in the parking lot of Half Price Books is near a dense neighborhood – by a block. However, it is not IN the neighborhood of homes and apartments. The market is on an extremely busy street, not conducive to biking or walking. We have analyzed the experience of the past two seasons and see that this location is not ideal for the grassroots, locally sourced, producer-only type of farmers market model we attempted to establish. Instead, we created lasting connections to urban growers who want to sell to their own immigrant families and neighbors – in the more dense area of the neighborhood. Our focus now and going forward is to facilitate this new version of a Vickery Meadow Market operated by and for the community.

ii. **Goal/Objective 2:** Create new SNAP/ EBT program at the Vickery Meadow Local Market, with a benchmark of 50 transactions per market.

a. **Progress Made:** Vickery Meadow Market has successfully established a SNAP program at the market, however we did not come close to our goal of 50 SNAP customers per market. The number of SNAP sales decreased from 2015 to 2016; both years were below the goal of numbers of SNAP sales. Our assessment is that the goal was unrealistic, and too high for this new location. Outreach in low-income communities of the Vickery Meadow neighborhood was not effective in attracting the desired customers. In 2016 we adjusted outreach strategies with more events at the market in conjunction with the International Rescue Committee and other non-profits. We moved the location of the market approximately 1/8th of a mile deeper into the neighborhood at the same address, and onto a busy thoroughfare. Our goal was for this change to increase visibility and natural interest among our neighbors. However, the Vickery Meadow Market continued to struggle without the core of a vibrant neighborhood of people living directly around it. The parking lot was difficult to access from an extremely fast and busy road. Most shoppers who visited the market browsed, and then went inside the neighboring bookstore instead of purchasing from the farmers market.

b. **Impact on Community:** While our SNAP sales have been low, we have in fact brought new customers into the market community from the Vickery Meadow neighborhood, and new food artisans and urban growers from Vickery Meadow. By offering new opportunities to Vickery Meadow residents, we have created new revenue streams and jobs for several individuals. Further, our observation of the low-income residents of the neighborhood has told us that many simply purchase using cash, and do not use the Lone Star card if they even have one. This is another point we intend to work on with our neighboring non-profits for the farm stand going forward.

iii. **Goal/Objective 3:** Our goal has also been to Improve the quality of life in East Dallas, specifically the Vickery Meadows area, by generating economic development, providing valuable experiences for customers and for new vendors starting businesses, and fostering meaningful cultural and social exchanges

a. **Progress Made:** Indeed we have provided another market outlet to farmers and growers in a large city with very few market options. In addition, we have added between 3 – 5 Vickery Meadow residents to our farmer/ growers. Our urban growers at Vickery Meadow are from immigrant communities with organic, culturally specific produce. At the beginning of the 2016 season we also included a Community Chef program where cooks from Asia, Iraq and Eritrea can sell their prepared cultural dishes to market customers.

b. **Impact on Community:** The Vickery Meadow Market has created a venue for community exchange, where customers can meet and get to know vendors, and easily learn about healthy fruits and

vegetables, other farm products, and culturally specific foods from VM residents. After two years of operation, the scaled down version Vickery Meadow Market has strong potential to become a dynamic cultural fixture in Dallas.

2. **Overall impact of the project: **Please see attached report prepared with data from 2015 and 2016 seasons.**
   i. Number of direct jobs created: GLM created 4 part-time positions to operate the Vickery Meadow Market; we employ 10 part-time staffers in total who indirectly have a role in supporting the Vickery Meadow Market.
   ii. Number of jobs retained: 4
   iii. Number of indirect jobs created: Vendors report an average of 4 jobs created to indirectly support their business at market. This translates into approximately 100 jobs.
   iv. Number of markets expanded: 2
   v. Number of new markets established: 1, continuing farmstand
   vi. Market sales: Our data set benchmarks for the new Vickery Meadow Market and therefore there is no earlier data to compare to. This year each market day included an average of 22 vendors, with an average of 10 agricultural vendors.
   vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 30
      a. Percent Increase: For both markets, the number of daily agricultural vendors increased from year 1 to year 2: from 11 to 14 in 2016.
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?** Yes, our market has expanded our reach into a low-income community (Vickery Meadow) and supported many new businesses in that community. However we have much work to do to increase sales among Lone Star (SNAP) users.

4. **Discuss your community partnerships.**
   i. Who are your community partners? Our community partners have been the Vickery Meadow Learning Center, International Rescue Committee, the Vickery Meadow Public Improvement District, Half Price Books, Trans.lation, Northwest Bible Church and Citizen D, and the NorthPark Presbyterian Church, as well as our many vendors.
   ii. How have they contributed to the results you've already achieved? Our partnership with VMLC has been critical as a way to generate knowledge of and interest in the farmers market. We distributed flyers through the VMLC, as well as to IRC clients. We hosted several popup produce stands at VMLC to generate awareness of our larger Vickery Meadow Market – and through this project we saw positive responses to such a small, weekday market and this experience has inspired us to recreate this at another community center. The IRC has partnered with GLM to organize this ongoing Vickery Meadow Market farmstand at the Northwest Community Center. For the last 2

seasons, the IRC has also been a partner in conducting tours of the larger market for its clients and translating information into several languages. The IRC has mentored several vendors from among its clients to become urban growers and sell produce at the market, and at the new Vickery Meadow Market farmstand. The Half Price Books corporate team has partnered with us to facilitate the market in the parking lot of their flagship location and ensure we have the necessary tools and safety measures in place. The Vickery Meadow Public Improvement District contributed funds to the start up of the market (late 2014) and continued to fund security staff to the market as required by Half Price Books.
NorthPark Presbyterian Church has partnered with us to bring a Reverse Food Truck to the market, accepting donations of cash and fresh foods from the market that ultimately serves the Vickery Meadow Food Pantry.

iii. How will they contribute to future results? All entities working with GLM to produce and promote the market will work with us to innovate strategies for developing the Vickery Meadow Market further.

5. **Are you using contractors to conduct the work?** If so, how has their work contributed to the results achieved thus far? The only contractor we use for the Vickery Meadow Market is the Southern Methodist University Center on Research and Evaluation to help us design data collection systems, and create reports and recommendations extracted from data collected.

6. **Have you publicized any results yet?** We have shared our CORE Report on Good Local Markets report with our partners, our customers via our website, and our vendors.
   i. If yes, how did you publicize the results? Website, direct email
   ii. To whom did you publicize the results? partners, our customers via our website, and our vendors
   iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? n/a

7. **Have you collected any feedback thus far about your work?** Yes, we have conducted vendor surveys and customer surveys throughout 2015. Those results are included in the attached CORE report.
   i. If so, how did you collect the information? Through paper surveys and "Dot Games" at the markets.
   ii. What feedback have you collected thus far (specific comments)?

   Results from our dot surveys were used to understand customer preferences and experiences with the market. Findings suggest that fruits and vegetables were the most popular products purchased at both markets. The majority of respondents heard about the markets by driving by. Surveys indicate more sales activity for a greater number of vendors at the Lakeside location, and fewer sales at Vickery Meadow. Providing a greater selection of produce was the top suggestion for improvement. The majority of respondents agreed that they eat more fruits and vegetables since they started shopping at the Good Local Farmers' Market. Time

conflicts were the greatest challenge to shopping at Vickery Meadow. The majority of VM respondents stated that they shop infrequently at the market. Additionally, most respondents indicated that they consider Good Local Markets part of the community.

8. **Budget Summary:**
   i. Total amount spent during reporting period:

Personnel:	68400.00
Contractual:	5000.00
Equipment Purchases:	00
Travel:	600
Supplies:	1990.00
Other:	8627.98
Indirect Costs:	
TOTAL:	82,627.98

   ii. Did the project generate any income?
      a. During the 2015-2016 seasons the market generated $20,772 in vendor fees. These funds were used for additional staffing, evaluation fees, rent on office and market location, additional printing costs, advertising, and supplies.

9. **Lessons Learned:**
Since the 2009 founding of our first location - White Rock - we have seen a continual rise in the number of small farms attempting to sell produce and other agricultural products at North Texas farmers markets (USDA 2012 census data). We have experienced wide support for the concept of a walkable, vibrant "town center" that offered locally grown and made farm products, integrating a healthy culture into the community. Our anchor location relies on this integration – with access by foot, bike, bus and car, and with families of various types and sizes, single professionals, low income apartments – in short an extremely diverse population around the market. Our general marketing success comes from simply being visible in the community drive-by traffic. The market is part of the neighborhood's identity, even during times when there are fewer customers. Over the past two years, however, we have seen interest wane in shopping for and cooking farm products. We have seen customers gravitate more toward convenience type foods, ready made or prepped for easy consumption. In addition, the general interest in "hobby farming," green living, community gardening, and all of the similar lifestyle activities that supported our farmers market model – all of these trends have shifted. These new trends have had an overall impact on sales at both farmers market locations, and indicate to us that Good Local Markets needs to explore new marketing and outreach strategies. In fact,

our new 2016 FMPP award will be vital in allowing us to expand and change our marketing model.

Meanwhile, the new Vickery Meadow Market served a significant need for low income and SNAP users to be able to purchase locally grown/made foods in Vickery Meadow, however we did not reach the numbers that we had hoped to.

During the past 2 seasons, weather played a significant role in the general success of the Vickery Meadow Market. Record rainfall in North Texas throughout 2015 meant that sales were low on frequent rainy market days and vendors struggled to attend at times due to rained out crops or other factors. Unusually hot weather in 2016 had similar effect.

Location was one other factor causing lower-than-desired sales (for general and SNAP sales) at the Vickery Meadow Market. The spot allotted to us by the Vickery Meadow Public Improvement District and by Half Price Books was in an area somewhat removed from neighborhood activity. In addition, the customer traffic we observed was bookstore customers. While these customers added to the vibrancy of the market, they were not purchasing farm products, not enough to sustain the vendors on their own.

Last, one partner changed significantly since the beginning of the Vickery Meadow Market project. One of the main supporters and drivers of the market concept (indeed we began the market at her invitation) was originally the Executive Director of the Public Improvement District (a non-profit/ government entity that uses tax dollars from local businesses to support the improvement of the district). This ED saw clearly how she meant to bring a farmers market to her community and use it to transform the otherwise crime ridden, struggling neighborhood using committed resources and her own ability to make connections and generate support and enthusiasm. This ED moved out of state to pursue another career, and her successor did not have the same commitment to the market and the community support and understanding of how a farmers market benefits a community has been lost. We believe that this loss created big challenges for us to reach deeper into the community and to find over-all success t that location.

As we have progressed through the second season of founding the Vickery Meadow Market, we have seen the demand for farm products among our general customers is not adequate for the abundant supply we bring to the neighborhood. Due to low sales, vendor participation dropped and was inconsistent. Consequently, low sales and low vendor turn-out during an excessively hot fall led us to the tough decision to end the Vickery Meadow Market season one month early.

We have determined that the market model we attempted to scale at Vickery Meadow - the community integrated, walkable, diverse and large market concept

that we have at our anchor market – does not reach the refugee/immigrant VM community in the ways we intended.

For a better outcome in bringing healthy fresh produce to Vickery Meadow residents and economic opportunity to urban growers in Vickery Meadow, we have responded to the expressed wishes of our customers and vendors and we have now concentrated remaining resources into a smaller Vickery Meadow Market at a well-used community center. We have held four markets to date, and have seen great support for this focused project. The vendors are urban growers who are immigrants themselves, often growing culturally specific produce for their neighbors. The cashiers at the market are also from this community, speaking many languages and creating a welcoming environment. Through continuing partnerships with the International Refugee Committee, in addition to new partnerships with The Hunt Institute/ Citizen D who serve the Vickery Meadow community, our joint activities support the scaled down, community focused Vickery Meadow Market.

Our mission and the goal of the Vickery Meadow Market is to establish a revenue-building opportunity for local farmers/ producers and access to fresh foods in the community. We believe that the Vickery Meadow Market has real potential to grow and fulfill that mission more and more. We are excited to continue to use our resources to support this market through creative outreach and marketing. And we are excited to continue to track outcomes and learn more to have the greatest positive impact on the stakeholders we serve.

Please see the following CORE Report for Good Local Markets for additional information.