

**Farmers Market Promotion Program
Interim Performance Report**

FARMER'S MARKET PROMOTION PROGRAM

MID-ATLANTIC GLEANING NETWORK

FINAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

This final report provides information regarding the progress made toward the objectives of the grant proposal. Particularly, recipients are expected to provide both qualitative and quantitative results to convey the activities and accomplishments of the work.

Provide answers to each question below, or answer "not applicable" or "no results available yet" where necessary. It is recommended that you email or fax your completed performance report to your assigned FMPP grant specialist to avoid delays. Should you need to mail your documents via hard copy, contact FMPP staff to obtain mailing instructions: FMPP Phone: 202-690-4152; Fax: 202-720-0300.

Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. October 1-March 31, 20XX)</i>	September 30, 2014 thru September 29, 2016
Today's Date:	December 25, 2016
Authorized Representative Name:	Thomas R. Chandler
Authorized Representative Phone:	571-221-3992
Authorized Representative Email:	tomchandler@midatlanticgleaningnetwork.org
Recipient Organization Name:	Mid-Atlantic Gleaning Network
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	MAGNET FARMS PRODUCE STAND NETWORK FOR MID-ATLANTIC FOOD DESERTS
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 15-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-FMPPX-VA-0168
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	LORTON/VIRGINIA
Total Awarded Budget:	\$99,995

FMPP staff may contact you to follow up

. Who may we contact?

Same Authorized Representative listed above.

1. Summarize the community need for the grant work:

The need for this project arises from the extensive poverty experienced by low income people in many communities in the Washington DC, VA and Baltimore areas. This is most pronounced in urban areas, but it exists also in "pockets of poverty" within even affluent counties in suburban

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areas. It exists largely “out of sight” also in many depressed rural areas. One out of three people seeking emergency food assistance in a recent survey was working at one or more jobs at the time indicating severe food insecurity by the working poor. Many people have left welfare for low paying service or retail jobs that have no health care, child care, or other benefits and need help with their household budget to survive. Among these poor, the typical diet is deficient in nutrition by the absence of fresh fruits and vegetables due to the lack of access, affordability issues, and ignorance of general nutrition principles and practices. In general, low income people do not maintain a food pantry and often experience food shortages caused by unexpected priority expenses, such as medicine or medical treatment, theft or other loss, life-controlling influences within the household (drugs, alcohol), broken relationships, depression, abuse, disability, and many other causes of income or revenue interruption. The community to be addressed in this project is the food insecure in DC, Prince Georges County, MD, Montgomery County, MD, Baltimore City, MD, Baltimore County, MD, Anne Arundel County, MD, and Fairfax County, VA. The need to be addressed is access to nutritious food for low income people. The innovative way in which the need will be addressed is by leveraging existing infrastructure to provide opportunities for these low income populations to acquire fresh nutritious produce at affordable prices in their own communities.

2. 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 and have been approved by FMPP staff, please highlight those changes (e.g. "new objective", "new contact", "new consultant", etc.). For each item below, qualitatively discuss the progress made toward each one and indicate the impact on the community, if any. You may add additional goals/objectives if necessary.

Goal #1: MAGNET FARMS will establish a network of 20 farm stands in low income communities in the Washington/Baltimore region over a period of two years to direct-market 350,000 lbs. of fresh nutritious produce and other agricultural products at affordable prices (25% of prevailing retail prices). Produce will be produced by contract growing agreements and joint ventures with local farmers.

Progress Made:

The first 9 months (1 October 2014-30 June 2015) was an off-season period of planning and preparation for the growing season which began in July 2015. A detailed business plan was developed. Initial and crucial startup tasks, were undertaken in this initial period, such as establishing the program, hiring staff, forming major partnerships, forming joint ventures with farmers for specific seasonal crops, acquiring equipment and supplies and materials, establishing an accounting and data collection system, recruiting volunteers, obtaining site approvals, obtaining access to nutrition programs with state authorities, recruiting/training farm stand operators.

Several conferences of church pastors were conducted to recruit churches for the retail market stand operations. A powerpoint presentation of the project was used to promote the project.

Demonstrations of market quality products at these conferences generated considerable interest but few commitments to undertake an actual produce stand. The staffing commitments required to hold regular farmers market events were found to be difficult for churches that were not accustomed to running retail businesses.

The next two months produce stand activities were conducted at one site in Prince Georges County Maryland near a border with Southeastern DC. One church took on the challenge enthusiastically. Initially this church planned to hold regular market events at two sites but soon realized they had to settle down with one site at which there was an established large flea market. There were 75-100 vendors at this site with several hundred potential customers regularly shopping every Saturday. The church held seven market events all day on Saturdays for two months. Average sales volume was approximately \$1200 each Saturday. The church kept the proceeds of sales for their outreach efforts to support the poor in the community. Business was generally strong with produce clearly being sold to low income customers who seldom consumed fruits and vegetables on a regular basis.

Occasionally business operations were interrupted with corresponding down turn in sales. One market event occurred with gunshots in the neighborhood which caused a mass exodus from the vicinity. Rain did not necessarily cause significant loss of revenue because customers and market operators were generally resistant to weather.

Eventually the manpower requirements of regular weekly market events became burdensome to the church. Key people left the church. The pastor, whose leadership was essential to continuity, said he could not be present every Saturday because he needed to prepare for Sunday services. So a new approach was needed.

Impact on the community

There was an immediate and lasting favorable reaction to the presence of the produce stand at this site by the community. Shoppers quickly recognized the value of fresh fruits and vegetables at very affordable prices (typically 25% below retail prices.) Initially there were no competing produce vendors at this site. The market organizers saw the favorable attitudes of the public as an advantage to the overall market and moved to place the produce stand in one of the most visible locations for all to see and appreciate. As in more affluent communities, the produce stand became something of a community gathering place. The produce stand operators took advantage of the public gathering to promote the nutritional value of fresh produce. Many commented that their diet did not consist of enough fresh produce, especially for their children. It is doubtful that this community conversation about health and nutrition would have taken place except for the attractive presence and presentation of the fresh produce within clear visibility of the entire market clientele. Eventually other vendors appeared with a few produce products seeing a market opportunity.

Goal #2: improve access by low income/diverse communities to market quality fresh fruits and vegetables from local farms and orchards.

Progress made

It became necessary to broaden the approach to produce sales by low income communities. One site was insufficient to accomplish goal #2 of improving access by low income/diverse communities to market quality local produce. Instead of separate produce stands envisioned for this project, the business model was changed from a single church staffing a regular market event as in a farmer's market to another model in which churches or community organizations held ad hoc sales events on their own timetable. So the MAGNET/CAF TEAM devised an approach to market produce through churches/community organizations that would take on major events to provide consumers with fresh produce which we would provide at an affordable price.

More promotion to churches and community organizations with this new model were held resulting in much better response from the low income communities targeted. It was helpful that this change in strategy coincided with the fall holidays. Turkeys were added to the product mix. Typically this time of year Thanksgiving baskets are in demand especially in low income communities. Access greatly expanded to several counties in the Washington/Baltimore area; namely, Prince Georges, Fairfax, DC, Baltimore City and County, Arlington, Loudoun Counties.

Response by the community

Churches and other community organizations enthusiastically responded to the prospects for supporting their outreach efforts to promote the consumption of fresh produce. The volume of poundage as well as the dollar value of sales greatly increased. Nutrition education efforts by CAF added to the value of this

project. The flexibility of allowing churches/community organizations to schedule their own market approach made all the difference in expanding access to many low income/diverse populations, including Hispanic, African, and other immigrant consumers.

Goal #3: provide additional market outlets for 350,000 pounds of locally grown produce with a product mix of 20 different fruits and vegetables.

Progress made

This project greatly expanded market outlets for local farms and orchards. Partnerships with farmers in St. Mary's County Maryland connecting thru the Produce Auction in Loveville Maryland, provided market outlets for farmers which could not market to the greater Washington/Baltimore area due to distances that their horse-drawn wagons could not traverse. A total of 35 farmers were engaged in this overall project. A total range of 49 products were sold, which was more than 200% of the goal of 20 different products. The poundage goal of 350,000 pounds of produce was exceeded by more than 130% at a total volume of 459,336 pounds.

Response by the community

There were more than 10 churches and community organizations involved in this marketing project. More than 656,194 consumers received an estimated .7lbs of food over the two year period of the grant. Qualitative feed back from the churches involved were positive, although the logistics burden was heavy.

3. Quantify the overall impact of the project on the intended beneficiaries, if applicable. Include further explanation if necessary.
 - i. Number of direct jobs created: 10
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: New start
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created:
 - iv. Number of markets expanded:
 - v. Number of new markets established: 11
 - vi. Market sales increased by \$65,320 dollars
 - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 35

4. 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 was a new start project, although every effort was made to reach low access populations.

5. Discuss your community partnerships.
 - i. Who are your community partners? Centro Apolyo de Familiar (CAF) was a primary partner in this project. CAF and MAGNET formed a partnership by MOU early in the project timetable. CAF took primary responsibility for organizing the churches which functioned as organizers and financial partners. MAGNET focused on the supply chain from the farms to the communities. The churches did the direct marketing to consumers.
 - ii. How have they contributed to the results you've already achieved? It would not have been possible to achieve the high volumes of domestic consumption of and access to locally and regionally produced fruits and vegetables without these partners and infrastructure.

- iii. How will they contribute to future results? The enthusiastic response from participants has built a momentum that will continue to expand in the future. The infrastructure is now in place to greatly expand produce consumption and markets in this region.
6. Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how has their work contributed to the results achieved thus far? No contractors were involved.
7. Have you publicized any results yet?
- i. If yes, how did you publicize the results? Primary mode of publicizing results has been thru conferences with church pastors, who passed along the news to their congregations in sermons, newsletters, mission outreach into communities they serve.
 - ii. To whom did you publicize the results?
 - iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? An estimated 600,000 people were touched by this project.
8. Have you collected any feedback thus far about your work?
- i. If so, how did you collect the information? Comments from church pastors and other participants
 - ii. What feedback have you collected thus far (specific comments)?
9. Budget Summary:
- i. Were there revisions to the budget during the reporting period? (As a reminder, budget changes that are substantive (e.g. changes in line items or amounts that exceed 20% of the original request) must be submitted via separate documentation by contacting LFPP staff. Changes indicated below are not approved until you have obtained prior approval.) There were no budget changes
 - a. If so, briefly describe the reasoning if the budget line item changed by more than 20%:
 - b. Provide the date that staff provided prior approval for the revisions of a budget line item that changed by more than 20%, if applicable:
 - ii. Total amount spent during reporting period:

Personnel:	\$74,295
Contractual:	
Equipment Purchases:	
Travel:	
Supplies:	\$18,200
Other: Promotion	\$7,500
Indirect Costs:	
TOTAL:	\$99,995

- iii. Amount of matching funds/in-kind contributions used during the reporting period:
- iv. Did the project generate any income?
 - a. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used?

\$65,320 generated. Used to support outreach of participating churches,

10. Summarize unexpected delays or problems (if applicable).
 - i. State the issue(s) and the reasoning behind its/their occurrence:
 - ii. How did the issues affect timelines?
 - iii. How did the issues affect the measureable results?
 - iv. How did the issues affect the budget?
 - v. How did your organization resolve the issue(s)?

Primary change was in business model from individual produce stands to reliance on community organization to deal with consumers

11. What grant activities/impacts do you hope to accomplish in the next six months? In other words, what do you plan to include in your next report to FMPP staff (interim or final)? For example, if you have not made progress toward all of your goals and objectives or sections of your work plan, how will you work towards accomplishing them before the next report? 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. If there are any changes or issues that were not covered under questions #9 or #10 above, please provide that information here. Future plans still under review. Farmers and consumers are requesting continuance.