

**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, 2015 – September 29, 2017
Authorized Representative Name:	Shonna Kirkpatrick
Authorized Representative Phone:	(404) 436-1818
Authorized Representative Email:	RockmartFarmersMarket@gmail.com
Recipient Organization Name:	The Rockmart Farmers Market, Inc.
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Stabilize and Expand the Polk County Farm to Consumer Capacity
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	15-FMPPGA0129
Year Grant was Awarded:	2015
Project City/State:	Rockmart, Georgia
Total Awarded Budget:	99,910.38

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: _____

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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.
 - **Goal/Objective 1: Heavily promote the Rockmart Farmers Market to increase market growth by providing new market opportunities for farmers, increasing awareness of and access to the market for low-income individuals and increasing total consumption of locally produced agricultural products.**
 1. **Progress Made: Over the course of the project and reporting period, visibility of the Rockmart Farmers Market has dramatically increased. Promotions such as Facebook and our refrigerator magnet promotion, have significantly increased visibility. Additionally, word of mouth has brought customers from metro Atlanta and other outlying communities.**
 2. **Impact on Community: The project has allowed us to impact the community in a myriad of ways. Our promotions have not only brought in new customers but have also helped to create new “regular” customers who return each week. These individuals, including those who are part of our SNAP-doubling program, have been able to directly benefit from locally produced, healthy food. Our success has also attracted other partner organizations that would like to share in our community outreach.**
 - **Goal/Objective 2: Develop new market opportunities for local producers by creating an online market, by supporting training to help them diversify their offerings and extend their seasons and expanding outreach to and opportunities for additional producers.**
 1. **Progress Made: Our winter market (made possible by this program) has been beneficial both for our participating farmers and for our customers. We are providing healthy options year-round and also providing opportunities for our vendors to continue sales through a normally slow season. This has allowed our vendors to expand their businesses by enabling them to have income from their products in every month of the year. Throughout the project we were also able to help provide training to farmers through classes and conferences.**
 2. **Impact on Community: In addition to the benefits provided to our farmers, we have also had an impact on the community. By opening year-round, we are providing resources not normally available. Even other nearby markets are closed for the winter making us one of the only open markets in our region.**
 - **Goal/Objective 3: Directly increase consumption by educating consumers on the importance, availability and benefits of locally and regionally produced agricultural products and by promoting agritourism focused on local farms and their practices.**
 1. **Progress Made: The development of our cooking classes has included a fully developed curriculum along with outreach and marketing of the classes. Classes have been well-attended and, thanks to our new**

website options, have been easy to manage and easy for customers to register for.

2. Impact on Community: **Our cooking and food preparation classes have been almost entirely sold out. Our kids cooking classes continue to be extremely popular. These classes help our young attendees learn about healthy food options and how to make them into delicious meals. Child interest has led to parent involvement. Almost all of them have become regular shoppers at our market.**
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, 2015) Include further explanation if necessary.
 - i. Number of direct jobs created: **Two, a salaried Executive Director along with a current part-time contractor turning into a full-time staff position in May 2018**
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: **1**
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: **Five new farmers along with increased employment at 3 farms**
 - iv. Number of markets expanded: **1**
 - v. Number of new markets established: **Zero – the strategic plan will be complete in March at which time we will know the type of expansion that is needed for the community. This expansion will include several new market opportunities.**
 - vi. Market sales increased to an estimated average of **\$1155 per week** and increased by **162%**.
 - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: **32**
 - Percent Increase: **129%**
 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?
 - i. **As an organization we have made it a priority to seek new customers that would be categorized as low income or low access. We have done this through making flyers available at Department of Family and Children Services offices in our county and all of the surrounding counties. In doing this we have been able to inform potential customers of our program when they apply for or renew SNAP benefits. We have also seen an increase in African American and Hispanic populations attending the market and engaging with several of our programs.**
 4. Discuss your community partnerships.
 - i. Who are your community partners? **Floyd/Polk Medical Center, Wholesome Wave Georgia, City of Rockmart, WellCare Health Plans, Polk County Chamber of Commerce, Rockmart Wal-Mart, Smith-Lockwood Pharmacy and Jewelry, State Farm Insurance Agent Sherman Ross, Coosa Valley Credit Union, Statham Tire.**
 - ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the FMPP project?
 - **Floyd/Polk Medical Center made a donation and has presented to the visitors on various topics including cooking demonstrations, basic health checks, and presentations from dieticians and nutritionists. A major partnership with Floyd/Polk Medical Center has also been created including large financial support for the next three years and a genuine spirit of**

partnership focused on improving the health of our community both economically and physically.

- **Wholesome Wave Georgia is providing us with 60% of the funds necessary to continue the SNAP doubling program, new equipment for processing SNAP, marketing supplies and general support.**
- **WellCare Health Plans helped us distribute magnets advertising important dates for the market and contributed additional funds needed for this season's SNAP doubling program. They have also increased the amount committed to us to help offset the increased program use. They have also provided mentoring for building partnerships that have greatly furthered our ability to attract deeper partnerships.**
- **The City of Rockmart has been helping to support the market through the donated use of the market space, kitchen space, special event space, and office space.**
- **Polk County Chamber of Commerce, the original founder of the market, continues to support RFM by providing us with general support. They have also provided us with a lifetime membership to the chamber allowing us to network and meet with community leaders to help spread information about our events and our mission.**
- **The Rockmart Wal-mart donated a \$75 dollar gift card to help us purchase supplies needed for the Farmers Market Community Kitchen and has encouraged employee volunteerism at the weekly market resulting in the ongoing support of 1 consistent volunteer. The community kitchen is a rearranged space created with FMPP grant funds.**
- **Smith-Lockwood made a \$50 donation and the board will decide how to use donated funds at a later date.**
- **Other partners have contributed funds to help continue the SNAP doubling program and fund ongoing operations.**

iii. **How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMPP grant? These and other partners are critical to our success in two significant ways. The financial and in-kind donations allow us to focus on our mission and complete our goals by stretching the dollars received through the FMPP grant. Floyd/Polk Medical Center has expanded their partnership to contribute greater funds and educational support for the next three upcoming years. The strengthening of this key partnership also demonstrates our credibility and helps attract additional partners and solidify the position of the market within the community. This partnership is also bringing together many different entities interested in improving the health of the local community both physically and economically. These partnerships are unique in their depth of potential impact helping to improve competitiveness for future funding for all partners involved.**

5. **Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the FMPP project? Contractors were primarily used to create the strategic plan but we also used a contractor for tax preparation and catering an event. The strategic plan is shaping into a valuable document focused on what is needed by the community from the farmers market and for the mission of improving the food and farming system. Once the plan is completed by March 2018 it will guide the organization in expanding deeper and further into**

the community, as well as strategically focusing that expansion to best serve the area.

6. Have you publicized any results yet?*
- i. If yes, how did you publicize the results? **We have continued to use our social media channels to publicize the progress of the market. Additionally, we have been covered by our local newspaper and have reported our success to WellCare and Wholesome Wave Georgia. We held our second stakeholders meeting on February 9, 2016 that was open to key players and the general public. A third stakeholders meeting is currently being planned for March 2018 after the strategic plan is complete. We also verbally keep our vendors up to date on our progress and speak at conferences, community events, and local health fairs.**
 - ii. To whom did you publicize the results? **Partners, community members, vendors, and customers. Our social networking followers and readers of The Polk Standard Journal (in print, online and through social networking) as well as our website RockmartFarmersMarket.com.**
 - iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? **70,000 including social media**

*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?
 - **We have collected feedback through allowing open comments on our social media-mainly through ratings on Facebook as well as collecting comments made at market from vendors and customers. We also did several surveys throughout the project to gather input.**
 - ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?
 - **Most of our reviews specifically discuss the consumer's enjoyment of our fresh fruits and vegetables. 73% of written reviews discuss the high quality of our goods. 33% of our written reviews praise our locally grown food. 20% of our written reviews praise our accessibility to low-income families. 20 % of our written reviews discuss the freshness and health qualities of our products.**
 - **"So glad you all are doing this (cooking classes) we would have to drive over an hour to partake in things like this."**
 - **"We came, we bought, and enjoyed the day."**
 - **"I have told all my friends about how awesome the cooking classes are and I'm bringing four friends with me this time. You guys are becoming a legend in Rockmart."**
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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? **No**
 - If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award?

9. Lessons Learned:

- i. A few key lessons were learned as part of this project:
 - a. **Both customers and farmers are excited about the opportunities to attend weekly farmers markets. It appears that the biggest barrier for both constituents is education and awareness. Once we began promoting our market well, all the other successes flowed naturally. Promotion is key.**
 - b. **Good reporting is both necessary and very difficult. It proved very challenging to get accurate data regarding total sales and number of customers from our farmers. Some were protective of their data while others just chose not to participate. As such, we are sure that the increases in sales reported above are VERY conservative. However, without accurate data collection methodologies, it is very difficult to improve the accuracy of these numbers. Reporting remains a key concern.**
- ii. **Most of our goals were achieved beyond our expectations. The online market is still struggling to get off the ground mainly due to barriers with technology and farmers.**
- iii. **As mentioned above, good and accurate data is key to both measuring success and impact as well as to reporting on programs as part of a grant. We would advise any who are looking to participate in a similar fashion to shore up their data gathering processes and tools BEFORE applying for a grant and to continuously improve them.**

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.
 - **Our market is now open year-round and will continue to be. Our new cooking classes are so popular that we hope to expand them in the coming years. We are also working now with other partners (whose attention we attracted as a result of this project) who we hope will help us continue our marketing efforts and also help with continued funding.**
 - **We are working with other markets throughout the state as part of the Georgia Farmers Market Association to share our successes (and challenges) with others in the hopes they can replicate some of our successes.**
 - **As part of the strategic plan we are building the foundation needed to expand our work to include other areas and stronger programs to help improve the food and farming system in our area.**
- 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?