

**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.

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| Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i> | October 1, 2015 – September 29, 2017 |
| Authorized Representative Name: | Gloria McAdam |
| Authorized Representative Phone: | 315-261-8054 |
| Authorized Representative Email: | gloria@gardenshare.org |
| Recipient Organization Name: | GardenShare |
| Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement: | SNAP Up Farm Fresh Produce |
| Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i> | 15-FMPP-NY0138 |
| Year Grant was Awarded: | 2015 |
| Project City/State: | Canton, NY |
| Total Awarded Budget: | \$57,500 |

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: Increase SNAP usage at farmers markets by 10% in each quarter that markets are open.
 - a. Progress Made: SNAP usage in the farmers markets in 2015 before the grant began was a total of \$3,764. By the 2017 market season, SNAP usage in the farmers markets had increased to \$5,193, a 38% increase.
 - b. Impact on Community: SNAP recipients had access to healthy, fresh, locally grown food and local farmers sales were increased.
 - ii. Goal/Objective 2: Recruit and train 20 volunteers to promote SNAP at farmers markets
 - a. Progress Made: 32 volunteers were recruited and trained to support the use of SNAP at the farmers markets
 - b. Impact on Community: These volunteers helped ensure that there was always someone present at the market to process SNAP transactions and helped explain and promote the use of SNAP at the markets.
 - iii. Goal/Objective 3: Publish and widely distribute an annual local food guide which promotes farmers markets to all audiences, including SNAP recipients and the general public.
 - a. Progress Made: The annual Local Food Guide was produced in both the spring of 2016 and 2017. 10,000 copies were produced and distributed via mail, through free weekly newspapers, at local farms and farmers markets, at many local sites like stores and libraries, and at events across the County. We believe we improved the 2017 Local Food Guide as compared to previous years, with additional information about local food and ways for people to engage with GardenShare. We look forward to continuing to improve the Guide going forward.
 - b. Impact on Community: The Local Food Guide helps people find and purchase locally produced food, both at the farmers markets in the County and directly from producers.
 - iv. Goal/Objective 4: Conduct other farmers market promotion activities, including media stories and interviews and social media promotion.
 - a. Progress Made: GardenShare implemented a “Veggie of the Month” promotion across multiple platforms. On the first of each month during market season (May to October) a Veggie of the Month entry was posted to our blog, website, and Facebook page. The entries would include fun facts about that veggie and a recipe. In addition to the online presence, we implemented the same promotion with two radio stations, doing in-person interviews the first week of each month to talk about the Veggie of the Month and what else was going on with the farmers markets. We provided the radio stations with farmers market tokens that could be given away in a contest with their listeners to help draw in new customers. In addition, we did one or two television interviews each year promoting the farmers markets. Finally, our Executive Director has a monthly column in one of our daily newspapers and had two columns on buying local and the farmers markets.

b. Impact on Community: These promotion activities raised the profile of the farmers markets in St. Lawrence County and brought additional people into the markets to shop.

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: 1
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: 2
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: 0
 - iv. Number of markets expanded: 0
 - v. Number of new markets established: 0
 - vi. Market sales increased by \$NA and increased by NA%.
 - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: NA
 - a. Percent Increase: NA

Because the markets are operated independently, the only data that GardenShare has access to for the five farmers markets we serve is the SNAP sales for the markets. Over the two year period of this grant, SNAP sales increased by 38% at the five farmers markets in St. Lawrence County.

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 was focused on bring more SNAP recipients to the farmers markets, though surely some of our general promotion work brought in the rest of the public. By combining the FMPP promotion funds with private funds, we were not only able to promote the farmers markets to low-income and SNAP recipients families, but also double SNAP benefits for those used their EBT card at the farmers market. As a result, we saw an increase of 38% in SNAP transactions at the farmers market over the two year period.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.
 - i. Who are your community partners? Cooperative Extension, St. Lawrence County Social Services, local NOEP contractor, St. Lawrence University, and local food pantries / soup kitchens / backpack programs
 - ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the FMPP project? We partnered with Cooperative Extension in their nutrition programming to promote the farmers markets to the low-income households, especially SNAP households, who were taking part in their nutrition classes and the "Eat Smart NY" program. We worked with County Social Services to ensure that social workers were providing information about SNAP at the farmers markets to their clients. We partnered with the region's NOEP worker to promote using SNAP benefits at the farmers markets. St. Lawrence University provided a full-time intern for ten weeks in the summer to help promote the farmers markets. We provided our local food pantries / soup kitchens / backpack programs with information to share with their clients about the farmers markets, the ability to accept SNAP benefits at the markets, and that GardenShare was doubling those benefits at the

market. We also partnered with the food pantries and soup kitchens on volunteer recruitment efforts.

- iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMPP grant? We will continue to work with all of these partners on both on educating their clients about the farmers market and on volunteer recruitment.

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

We used a contractor to design the Local Food Guide. This improved the quality of the graphics and design beyond what our own staff could do internally and made the Guide more attractive for people to pick up and actually use it.

6. Have you publicized any results yet?*

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

We publicized our 2016 results on the blog on website as follows:

November 23, 2016: <https://gloria-gardenshare.blogspot.com/2016/11/happy-thanksgiving.html>

December 25, 2016: https://gloria-gardenshare.blogspot.com/2016/12/12-days-12-ways-gardenshare-is-making_25.html

December 26, 2016: <https://gloria-gardenshare.blogspot.com/2016/12/help-gardenshare-make-impact.html>

A press release was issued on November 9, 2016 highlighting the 2016 results and is included in the attachments.

The Local Food Guide was published in June of 2016 and 2017 and distributed widely across St. Lawrence County.

- ii. To whom did you publicize the results?

The blog entries appear on our website and our Facebook page and reach primarily people who already have some affiliation with GardenShare as volunteers, donors, clients, or friends of the organization.

A story appeared in our local daily newspaper, as well.

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

Facebook/blog – 1,000 people

Local Food Guide – 10,000 copies distributed via insert in local newspapers, direct mail, and hand-outs at local organizations and events

*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 surveyed market customers and market vendors at the end of the season each of the two years, using both an online survey and in-person surveys conducted by volunteers at the farmers markets.
 - ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?
2016 season end feedback:
 - Some local farmers reported increases in their sales ranging from 20 to 50%.
 - "I never come to the market that I do not see someone I know but might not see often. It is a pleasure to get to know the farmers and experience the interconnectedness of our community."
 - "Speaking with the farmers is very helpful. I learn more about nutritional factors and how to prepare the food. I like the general sense of community created."
2017 season end feedback:
 - "I love knowing where my food comes from, being able to talk with the farmers. I love buying produce that hasn't traveled thousands of miles or been sprayed with god-knows-what!"
 - "I like interacting with the farmers and knowing how my food was produced."

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
 - 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).

The key to bringing more SNAP clients to the farmers markets was clearly the ability to double SNAP benefits at the markets. The funds to do this were raised privately and were a significant contribution to the success of our farmers market promotion efforts.

We also found that the local media – print, radio, and tv – was very interested in the farmers markets and more than willing to do stories about the market if we could provide them with the background and information.

One lesson learned was around volunteers. We found volunteers were willing to help at the farmers markets, but it was more challenging to find volunteers to go out into the community to food pantries and soup kitchens and promote the farmers markets to the

clientele there. We also had some challenges with scheduling volunteers. It took more staff time than anticipated to organize and schedule the volunteers for various tasks.

- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:

- 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:

Volunteer management takes more time and effort than you think it's going to. Whether it's recruiting and training volunteers or just scheduling them to help out, it's important to plan on enough staff time for these activities.

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.

GardenShare will continue to work on farmers market promotion via volunteers and student interns from our local colleges. GardenShare will also continue to seek private funds to allow us to double the value for SNAP customers, as this is clearly the primary driver to bring SNAP recipients to the farmers markets.

Without funding, there will be no jobs created, but GardenShare continues to work on other options for support include AmeriCorps VISTA.

- 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?

USDA should consider a partnership with AmeriCorps VISTA to support organizations in rural and remote places and further the efforts to help low-income people access the farmers markets and local produce.