

**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:	Mary Catherine Farrell
Authorized Representative Phone:	843.383.3015
Authorized Representative Email:	Mary.farrell@hartsvillesc.gov
Recipient Organization Name:	City of Hartsville
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Hartsville Farmers' Market Enhancement and Expansion
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	15FMPPSC0027
Year Grant was Awarded:	2015
Project City/State:	Hartsville, SC
Total Awarded Budget:	\$51,041.00

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.

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.

1. Employ targeted outreach to LMI (low to moderate income) neighborhood to diversify consumer base and increase access to fresh produce/dairy/meats for those currently without.
 - a. Progress Made: Staff polled community leaders to determine best marketing strategies and determined their plan accordingly: word of mouth, print and radio were primary mechanisms. Staff attended neighborhood association meetings throughout the performance period to promote the Market in the target community. Additionally, we attended a major event in the neighborhood (Taste of Butler, Butler Heritage Week 2017) to promote the Market. At this event, we did a cooking demonstration featuring all fresh, local ingredients, and provided samples and recipe cards with market information to the est. 300 attendees. Staff presented information about the Market to local minority church pastors at one of their regular Ministerial Alliance meetings and requested their support in promoting the market to their congregations. We placed flyers in apartment complexes; neighborhood meeting places, such as churches, barber shops, library, parks; as well as popular restaurants, service providers and shops around time. We included marketing materials with water bill mailers, guaranteeing every legally occupied house in the neighborhood received information. Finally, we advertised on popular local radio stations. Mention of EBT (food stamp equivalent) acceptance was featured prominently in advertisements. Estimated total reach: 8,750 individuals, including 100% of head of households in target neighborhood.
 - b. Impact on Community: Through regular interaction with neighborhood residents and key stakeholders, we introduced our target community (over 1,700 low to moderate-income minority residents) to the affordability and accessibility of our local Market, and the benefits of shopping local and fresh.
2. Expand footprint of market to increase vendor capacity.
 - a. Progress Made: Downtown business owners, market vendors, market customers and other key stakeholders were polled to determine the best hours of operation and location for the downtown Market. The market was expanded and new hours set based on their input. Vendor capacity was increased significantly, leading to a 33% increase in total season vendor count from 202 in 2015 to 268 in 2017. This is an average of 30 vendors/exhibitors (local food producers, artisans, and community partners) per market at the main monthly market.
 - b. Impact on Community: This additional capacity led to expanded diversity of market offerings for customers and more direct connections between consumers and producers.
3. Diversify advertising media and expand promotional reach to grow consumer base and regional impact.
 - a. Progress Made: In addition to the advertising strategies discussed above, we utilized billboards, a text messaging service, social media, e-flyer distribution through the school

- i. Number of direct jobs created: 1
- ii. Number of jobs retained: 1
- iii. Number of indirect jobs created: 0
- iv. Number of markets expanded: 0
- v. Number of new markets established: 1
- vi. Market sales increased by \$2,953 and increased by 29% from the 2015 to 2016 season. Market sales decreased by \$2,261 and decreased by 22% from the 2015 to 2017 season. This was due to crop decimation by extreme weather.
 - I. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: Three farmers were added to the market's regular line-up, the total number of farmers increased from the baseline of 9 to 12 at the end of the grant, a 33% increase from 2015 to 2017.

7. 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?
 Low income/low access populations were exposed to the availability of the market and the acceptance of EBT at the market through church bulletins/church announcements, flyers in neighborhood gathering places, promotional booths and demonstrations at neighborhood events, radio advertisement, billboards, etc. We exhausted every conceivable marketing outlet and intentionally recruited staff and interns to ensure a representative and approachable staff.

8. Discuss your community partnerships.

- vii. Who are your community partners? Butler Heritage Foundation, Kalmia Gardens, Black Creek Arts Council, Friends of the Library, churches, civic organizations, Hartsville High School
- viii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the FMPP project? Increased awareness of the market to their own respective constituents/stakeholders.
- ix. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMPP grant? They have committed to continued promotion, and where applicable, participation in the Market.

9. Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the FMPP project? We are not using contractors to conduct the work.

10. Have you publicized any results yet?*

- x. If yes, how did you publicize the results? No
- xi. To whom did you publicize the results? n/a
- xii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? n/a

*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).

11. Have you collected any feedback from your community and additional stakeholders about your work?

- xiii. If so, how did you collect the information? We interviewed our farmers to get their feedback on our efforts. We surveyed market goers at various points throughout the 2016 and 2017 market seasons.

- xiv. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)? While the farmers were very grateful for all of the time, money and effort invested, the two largest vendors shared the same concerns: farmers like them are aging out. Because the profit margins diminish even further every year and they can't compete with grocery stores who sell "organic" goods (but really aren't organic) for a fraction of the price of locally sourced goods, they can't compete. Their sons and daughters don't want to take over the family business because it's not lucrative and it's high stress. While they maintain a base of loyal Farmer's Market customers who will pay the price for quality, locally sourced foods (produce, meat and dairy), they get many who refuse to pay such high prices and simply stop coming. Another of our anchor vendors is a woman who grows and sells blueberries. She lost her entire crop this market season thanks to a hurricane last year, so her sales plummeted this season to just around \$500, compared to \$4,900 last season. In short, no matter how much advertising we do, there are unfortunately some things that are out of our control.

12. Budget Summary:

- xv. 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:
- xvi. 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?

13. 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).
- Market Manager: We faced major problems with staff turnover for the Market Manager position. Over the course of just two seasons, we had four different market managers. This was a low pay, low hour job, making retention very difficult. This constant changing of staff posed challenges in terms of consistency and congruency in completing projects. The lesson here learned would be maybe to pay higher wages or give more hours if resources allowed. We reached out to the farming community and Clemson University, because they have a very-strong agricultural program, to recruit quality candidates, but got no bites. Each one of the four who worked with us had their own strengths and weaknesses, so it was a learning experience in terms of what skills/experience combination were ideal for that position. For example, we had an excellent manager for a few months who was attending college locally, but she transferred to a school in another part of the state so we lost her. She had been very active in the state Future Farmers of America chapter, but no marketing-specific degree. She knew a network of farmers but was not, say, a professional graphic designer, versus someone with a marketing degree but who the farming community might not have gotten along as well with or trusted as much.
- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:

- a. All goals were achieved, although not to the degree we would have hoped. Specifically, market sales did not increase significantly, thanks to one of our main vendors' crop being decimated by a hurricane for the most recent market season. Also, some of our farmers only sell during harvest season. Canning or freezing produce would enable them to sell for the entirety of the market season.
- 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:

One lesson learned was that our larger, monthly markets were held on the 2nd Saturdays of the month, but EBT benefits go out the 1st of the month. For planning future markets, perhaps they should be closer to the date of when benefits are received. Also, for Senior Vouchers, and similar services, recipients didn't want \$20-\$25 worth of produce because it would spoil before they could consume it.

14. Future Work:

- xvii. 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.

We will use our efforts here to continue to advocate for our local farmers and encourage our citizens to be responsible, conscientious consumers.

- xviii. 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?

Not at this time.