

**FARMERS' MARKET AND LOCAL FOOD PROMOTION PROGRAM  
(FMLFPP)  
Final Performance Report**

The final performance report summarizes the outcome and activities of your FMLFPP award objectives. Failure to submit acceptable closeout reports for an existing grant within 90 calendar days following the grant end date may result in exclusion from future AMS grant opportunities.

This final report will be made available to the public once it is approved by FMLFPP 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 **due within 90 days of the project's performance period end date** (as noted in box 15 of your grant agreement (AMS-33), or sooner if the project is complete. The report must be typed single-spaced in 11-point font, not to exceed fifteen (15) 8.5 x 11 pages (excluding existing Final Performance Report form content). For example, if the Final Performance Report form is six (6) pages before you begin entering your project information into the form, your report may be up to 21 pages (6 pages + 15 pages).

Provide answers to **each question** and all applicable outcome and indicators as it applies to your project. If you are unable to provide a response explain why. It is preferred that you email your completed performance report to your assigned FMLFPP Grants Management Specialist to avoid delays. In case of any extraordinary reason a faxed report can be accepted; please notify your assigned Grants Management Specialist to inform about your submission.

<b>Report Date Range:</b> <i>(e.g. October 1, 2016 -September 30, 2017)</i>	September 30, 2016 - May 15, 2019 (completed project earlier than original end date)
<b>Date Report Submitted</b>	14 June 2019
<b>Grant Agreement Number:</b> <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-)</i>	16FMPPIL0037
<b>Recipient Organization Name:</b>	The Land Connection Foundation (TLC)
<b>Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:</b>	Champaign Farmers Market: Expanding Access to Local Foods through Promotion and Training
<b>Authorized Representative Name:</b>	Jacquelyn Evers
<b>Authorized Representative Phone:</b>	217-840-2128
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<b>Year Grant was Awarded:</b>	2016
<b>Amount of Award:</b>	\$84,293.74

FMLFPP 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. Executive Summary—In 200 words or less, describe the project’s need, purpose, goals, and quantifiable outcomes:

The Land Connection will increase consumption of fresh, local food and strengthen the Champaign, IL market opportunities by diversifying the number and types of patrons attending the market and increasing market sales by 1) building a sustainable and collaborative marketing campaign to reach potential customers, with a focus on low-income residents, 2) increasing visibility of vendors at the market, and 3) increasing farmer-vendor market readiness by conducting pre-market training. Through promotional efforts and at-market activities, we will increase SNAP use by 100%, draw 26% more customers to the market, and increase overall market sales by 20%, or \$28,000, over the course of the project period. The Land Connection and its project partners will increase direct producer-to-consumer sales, increase vendor visibility, and increase vendor success at the market through pre-market training.

2. Please provide the approved project’s objectives:

Objectives		Completed	
		Yes	No*
1	Build a sustainable and collaborative marketing campaign to reach potential customers, with a focus on low-income residents	X	
2	Increase visibility of current and potential new vendors	X	
3	Conduct pre-market training for regional farmers and vendors, focusing on market readiness, budgeting, and booth design	X	

\*If no is selected for any of the listed objectives, you must expand upon this in the challenges section.

3. List your accomplishments for the project’s performance period and indicate how these accomplishments assisted in the fulfillment of your project’s objectives. Please include additional objectives approved by FMLFPP during the grant performance period, and highlight the impact that activities had on the project’s beneficiaries.

Accomplishments	Relevance to Objective, Outcome,
<p>In 2017, TLC developed a two-workshop series called <i>Mastering the Farmers’ Market</i>. The series consisted of one workshop on <i>Marketing and Booth Design</i> and a second on budgeting and financial tools, called <i>Money Matters at the Farmers’ Market</i>. Each 3-hour workshop was held once in Champaign and once in Springfield with a registration cost of \$25.</p> <p>The <i>Marketing and Booth Design</i> workshop featured a talk by Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES) 2017 Organic Farmer of the Year on effective booth design and marketing strategies for building solid customer relationships. The workshop then featured a consulting session with local marketing experts. Farmer participants were asked ahead of the workshop to bring in any examples of their own marketing materials and/or pictures of their booths, and we were also able to open up their social media pages for feedback in small</p>	<p>Objective 3 Outcome 3</p>

groups from our marketing consultants. The *Money Matters* workshop featured a talk on small business concepts as applied to farmer’s market vendors, presentations on a few different online budgeting tools, including basic Google Forms, Square, Veggie Compass, and Quickbooks. Following the workshops, we analyzed participant survey results to improve curriculum, materials and workshop locations for the 2018 workshop series.

It was determined for 2018 that the workshop series would once again consist of one workshop on marketing and booth design (*Cultivating Customers at the Farmers Market*) and a second on budgeting and financial tools (*Money Matters at the Farmers’ Market*). However, in order to reach a wider audience of new farmers, TLC decided to choose a new location for one repetition of the workshop series. Since Springfield, Illinois did not attract many participants, TLC chose southern Illinois, with a hope of attracting farmers from southern Illinois and the St. Louis area. Both 3-hour workshops from the series were held in Mount Vernon, Illinois. We also decided to adapt the second repetition of workshop series into two webinars, rather than hold the series another year in Champaign. The webinars were recorded and are now available on our website. Additionally, the change from workshop to webinar helped TLC achieve one of our objectives from 2017, which was to record each of the workshops to share on our website.

For the Mount Vernon, in-person workshop series, we worked with a Southern Illinois farmer who runs a successful farmers market and CSA operation. This individual also works with farmers in the area on improving their marketing and business planning skills.

For the webinar series, we once again worked with MOSES’ 2017 Organic Farmer of the Year on the *Cultivating Customers* webinar. 48 registrants participated in the webinar and, to date, the recording of the webinar has been viewed 105 times through our website. The *Money Matters* webinar also included MOSES’ 2017 Organic Farmer of the Year, and also the co-author of the book *Fearless Farm Finances: Farm Financial Management Demystified*. This webinar had 19 registrants and, to date, the recording of the webinar has been viewed 65 times through our website. The full series has had 1,256 page views.

After the 2016, 2017, and 2018 seasons, TLC reviewed and revamped our marketing plan. We focused on reaching local low-income/low-access (LI/LA) households, as well as the general public. The campaign aimed to improve our distributed marketing materials, so that pertinent information about the Market (e.g. time, location) was more visible. We also developed fliers to explain more clearly how the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) incentive program at the Market works and in 2018 had those same flyers translated into Spanish, with a French translation added for 2019. We mapped out milestones for the entire season; created print advertisements, bus advertisements, digital

Objective 1  
Outcome 1, Indicators 1  
Outcome 2, Indicators 1-2

<p>billboards, and radio copy; and, outside of our FMPP project work, the Farmers Market Manager was able to build new relationships to secure additional in-kind advertising donations in the form of radio spots and matching ads donated by the local newspaper, our local NPR station, and our local public transit system. In 2017 and 2018 the in-kind donations from the local newspaper allowed TLC to double the original print advertising budget we had written into the grant. Survey data from the Market showed that the marketing campaign worked. Customers found the variety of advertisements to be helpful and that the radio and bus advertisements were the most common way patrons learned about our Market, so TLC decided to forego billboard advertising in 2019. Over the course of our FMPP award, TLC purchased ads in a local online magazine, print advertisements in the News Gazette, exterior and interior bus advertisements, underwriting spots on our local NPR affiliate, and underwriting spots with the local community college radio stations.</p>	
<p>In 2017, TLC developed interview questions for vendors and created vendor profiles, which were shared as social media posts leading into and during the 2017 market season. In 2018, TLC created a vendor profile page on the TLC website, highlighting vendors throughout the season and incorporating favorite recipes from each farmer that will be available for download. In 2019, TLC determined it would be best to house vendor lists on our Champaign Farmers Market Facebook page, which receives much more engagement than our vendor list on the TLC website. We also have incorporated vendor spotlights in our newsletter and on social media.</p>	<p>Objective 2 Outcome 1, Indicators 1 Outcome 2, Indicators 1-2</p>
<p>TLC purchased durable supplies for regular cooking demonstrations and a sampling tent featuring simple recipes using vendor products.</p> <p>In 2016 and 2017, TLC offered sampling of both fresh produce and simple recipes at the market each week, giving out an average of 250 samples/week for 24 weeks. We collaborated with local dieticians and chefs who developed recipes that we handed out, and we held cooking demonstrations 2-3 times per month where patrons could see the recipe being prepared before tasting. We created clearer signage indicating where ingredients could be purchased at the Market and vendors noted a direct impact on sales when their products were featured.</p> <p>In 2018, TLC continued to offer regular cooking demonstrations and samples of recipes using simple combinations of vendor products at the Market each week, but due to a change with public health requirements switched to a partnership with SNAP-Ed at the University of Illinois Extension Office.</p>	<p>Objective 2 Outcome 2, Indicators 1-2</p>
<p>In 2017, TLC increased overall market patron attendance by 10%. Even more encouraging was that overall reported sales increased by just under 40% over the 2016 reported numbers, which was well above our 2-year project goal of increasing sales by 20%.</p> <p>In 2018, we saw a very slight increase (3%) in market patron attendance and a very slight increase in overall reported sales. While promising</p>	<p>Objective 1 Outcome 2, Indicators 1-2</p>

<p>that we continue to see growth, TLC also reports this as a challenge that helped us evaluate what our plans were for 2019.</p>	
<p>Throughout the grant period, sales data collection was very successful, with around 75% of vendors reporting each week.</p> <p>In 2017, of the 14 returning vendors who sold at the Market in 2016, 11 reported an increase in sales, with the average increase around 40%. Three vendors reported a slight decrease, but two of them had sporadic participation at the Market. Additionally in 2017, every month of the market, except June, saw a significant increase in sales over our 2016 season, with an increase of at least 25% in May and October, and increases of 80% in July-September.</p> <p>In 2018, we saw a 2% decrease in average sales compared to 2017. However, many of the vendors did not report regularly and a handful did not report at all. Of those that consistently attended the market, reported sales, and had a history of selling at the Champaign Farmers Market, they saw over 10% increase in their average sales.</p>	<p>Objective 2 Outcome 2, Indicator 1 Outcome 3, Indicator 2a</p>
<p>TLC surveyed customers at the Market, with an emphasis on SNAP program users and customers, who sampled products or participated in cooking demonstrations. This data allowed us to better understand the purchasing habits of customers.</p> <p>In addition to formal surveys, TLC also collected data on SNAP customers as they made transactions at our Link card machine. This data allowed us to track new and repeat customers, as well as ask how new customers learned about the SNAP program.</p>	<p>Objective 1 Outcomes 2 and 5 Surveying will help us further understand the effects of our promotional activities purchasing habits.</p>
<p>TLC developed an end-of-season survey, which was offered to vendors at the 2017 and 2018 November wrap-up meetings. Survey results from the vendors have been analyzed and included as a separate report, which assists TLC with market programming for future seasons.</p>	<p>Objective 2 Outcome 1, Indicator 1</p>
<p>2017 was TLC's strongest SNAP season, with a 126% increase in the amount of SNAP benefits spent at the Market (from \$2,771 swiped in 2016 to \$6,271 in 2017). We also increased our SNAP customer base by 133% (from 79 in 2016 to 184 in 2017). In addition, we saw 132 new SNAP customers use their benefits (a 181% increase over 2016) and had 77 repeat customers (a 208% increase over 2016). In year 2017 alone, we nearly tripled our projection for the FMPP project period.</p> <p>TLC's SNAP program held steady in 2018 compared to the 2017 season. We distributed \$9,665 in matching funds* to 184 SNAP customers at the Market. Of those 184 customers, 121 were new to the Market and 75 became repeat customers. In 2018, we were able to increase the average amount of SNAP funds spent at the Market per week through our matching program. Additionally, due to acquiring funding from grants and donations* for some strategic new incentives, we saw a significant increase in spending at the last market of each month, which is generally a time when many SNAP recipients' accounts are running low.</p>	<p>Objective 1 Outcome 5, Indicator 1</p>

<p>** Please note that all funding for SNAP incentives at the Champaign Farmers Market was acquired outside of our FMPP project work. TLC did not utilize FMPP funds to write grants for additional funds or solicit funding from individuals and/or businesses.</p>	
<p>In 2018 TLC hosted a remote broadcast of a popular local NPR station talk show, The 21<sup>st</sup> (described in more detail in the previous section), which airs on WILL-AM each week. Prior to the on-site broadcast, the program’s host invited our Market Manager for an interview discussing the ways farmer’s markets in Illinois are working to boost the purchasing power of SNAP recipients. After the interview, the show’s producers pitched a full show to our Market Manager that would be devoted to SNAP, local foods, and the 2018 Farm Bill negotiations and would be recorded at one of our upcoming markets. TLC assisted in putting together a panel of farmers, SNAP recipients, representatives of local programs that combat food insecurity, and agriculture specialists from the University of Illinois. The program is available to listen to at: <a href="https://will.illinois.edu/21stshow/program/welcome-to-the-champaign-farmers-market">https://will.illinois.edu/21stshow/program/welcome-to-the-champaign-farmers-market</a></p>	<p>Objective 1 Outcome 1, Indicator 1-2</p>

4. Please list any challenges experienced during the project’s period of performance. Provide the corrective actions taken to address these issues.

Challenges (Issues)	Corrective Actions and/or Project Changes (s)
<p>We found participant recruitment challenging for the <i>Mastering the Farmers’ Market</i> workshops. TLC has found, after reviewing workshop trends for our organization, that overall we have been having difficulty getting farmers registered for business-oriented training courses.</p>	<p>One of TLC’s primary challenges in 2017 was low workshop attendance at the farmer’s market training workshops in Springfield, which was the second location for each workshop in the series. We had initially viewed Springfield, Illinois as a prime, centrally located city that would draw participants from a number of central Illinois farming communities. Despite our best efforts at promoting the workshops, we struggled to fill each class. Due to the attendance issues experienced in Springfield, TLC decided to move workshop locations for 2018.</p> <p>For 2018, TLC partnered with Food Works in southern Illinois because they identified a need among their farmer’s market community for the trainings we were offering and, together, we selected a location that would be convenient for both southern Illinois farmers and Saint Louis area farmers. Unfortunately, filling the workshops was still a struggle. We ultimately decided to offer the second round of workshops planned for Champaign-Urbana as online webinars, which we were able to record and make available on our website for market farmers to view and listen to at any time. To date we have had 170 views combined for the two webinars. In experimenting with days, dates, times, and formats</p>

	<p>for in-person workshops, we have developed an understanding that farmers are beginning to enjoy formats that they can access on their own time. The webinar format also allowed farmers and market managers from across the country to access the content.</p>
<p>2017 survey data collection was initially low because TLC was relying primarily on dot surveys, which did not engage the public.</p>	<p>TLC developed a Google Form survey we could complete on an iPad during the market. We recruited volunteers comfortable with speaking to the public to engage customers. We were able to gather significantly more data on the effect of both the sampling tent and the SNAP incentive program, as well as their contribution to improved produce purchasing habits.</p>
<p>TLC struggled attracting local newspaper attention so that we could get print articles published about the Champaign Farmers' Market.</p>	<p>When success was not possible with local newspaper attention, TLC pivoted to find other avenues for Market promotion. In 2017 and 2018, TLC was featured monthly on our local online magazine, <i>Smile Politely</i>. Our Market Manager also made regular appearances on our local CBS and FOX affiliates. More specifically, our Market Manager appeared on the local CBS morning shows five times during the 2018 market season, as well as gave approximately three interviews filmed on-site at the Market.</p> <p>In addition to the appearances our Market Manager was able to make on CBS and FOX, our Market Manager was also able to speak on a popular local NPR talk show, <i>The 21<sup>st</sup></i>, on multiple occasions. TLC even hosted a remote broadcast of the same program on-site at the Market in 2018. More information on this experience can be found in other sections throughout this report.  <a href="https://will.illinois.edu/21stshow/program/welcome-to-the-champaign-farmers-market">https://will.illinois.edu/21stshow/program/welcome-to-the-champaign-farmers-market</a></p>
<p>During 2016 and 2017, TLC operated a centralized sampling tent at the Market led by staff and volunteers that hold the Illinois Farmers Market Sampling Certificate. The certificate allows for the on-site preparation of samples at farmers markets as long as key provisions are met, which include hand washing stations, gloves, food tents, and temperature controlled holding systems. Though the sampling certificate is not issued by our local public health authority, TLC consulted with them before launching the sampling tent in 2016. In 2018, the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District informed us that after reviewing the Illinois Department of Public Health's sampling rules, they had come to the determination that these rules only applied to farmers market vendors sampling their own product. Based on this</p>	<p>Because TLC was no longer able to serve samples that had been prepared on site, we sought out a community partner for 2018 who could prepare samples in a commercial kitchen to be served at market, which is allowed under our local public health regulations. TLC ended up partnering with the Illinois Nutrition Education Program (through the University of Illinois Extension) team for the entire farmers market season. They selected recipes from their SNAP-Ed curriculum and prepared them with produce from our Market vendors. They would then demonstrate certain aspects of the recipe preparation to customers, but would only serve what had been prepared in advance in their commercial kitchen. This solution complied with our local public health district requirements while still providing our customers with</p>

<p>interpretation, they would no longer allow the sampling booth to continue as it had in previous seasons.</p>	<p>a component of the farmers market that was important to their purchasing.</p>
<p>During the 2018 season TLC suffered a slight dip in patron attendance during our peak season, in August, which hit the Market hard in terms of expected sales. We also had lower patron turnout in June, which was the only month to dip lower than our 2016 benchmark (before the start of FMPP support).</p>	<p>Seeing that TLC's 2018 season was not as strong as we had anticipated, we worked to raise the Market's visibility during the final two months of the season. In addition to our regularly scheduled print, radio, online, billboard, and bus advertising, we sought out additional television and radio interviews, hosted a farmers market themed art event at the local Saturday farmers market, and tabled at community events to reach new customers.</p> <p>As a result, we saw a 5% increase in attendance in September compared to 2017, which was a 13% increase over 2016. We also saw a 15% increase in October attendance over the 2017 season.</p> <p>We have been analyzing causes of 2018's lower attendance and identified several contributing factors. In 2017, TLC concentrated our advertising purchases in May, September, and October, which are typically the slowest months. This decision relied on the momentum from May and the natural interest in farmers markets during peak tomato season to spread awareness. While this strategy worked well in 2017, we would have benefited from more advertising during the peak months in the 2018 season. Weather was also a factor this year. Our farmers market experienced a number of very hot afternoons, as well as some major storms. Finally, TLC struggled with regular vendor attendance from a handful of vendors, which is discussed below in more detail. Heading into the 2019 season, we have revamped our marketing strategy and outreach efforts to hopefully alleviate the 2018 trends.</p>
<p>Vendors were not as cooperative in reporting sales data.</p>	<p>In 2018, TLC noted that many vendors were more sporadic in reporting, which makes it difficult to build data on the successes and failures of our Market. We had hoped to continue seeing an increase in participation, so this trend was particularly troublesome. During the annual post-season meeting with vendors, the TLC Market Manager discussed, at length, the need for sales reporting. Hopefully these efforts will make a difference for 2019.</p>
<p>Sporadic attendance by some vendors.</p>	<p>Vendor attendance represents another area that TLC will be revisiting with Market policies to help ensure more consistent participation by vendors. Patrons of the Market rely on consistency from the vendors when they are shopping, so making this a priority for vendors is a must. An example of an incentive to</p>

	encourage vendors would be granting priority acceptance to vendors who demonstrate consistent commitment to selling at the Market.
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5. Quantify the overall progress on the outcomes and indicators of your project. Include further explanation if necessary.

**Outcome 1: To Increase Consumption of and Access to Locally and Regionally Produced Agricultural Products.**

Indicator	Description	Number
<b>1.</b>	<b>Total number of consumers, farm and ranch operations, or wholesale buyers reached</b>	<b>35,000</b>
<b>1.a.</b>	The number that gained knowledge on how to buy or sell local/regional food OR aggregate, store, produce, and/or distribute	1,000
<b>1.b.</b>	The number that reported an intention to buy or sell local/regional food OR aggregate, store, produce, and/or distribute local/regional	550
<b>1.c.</b>	The number that reported buying, selling, consuming more or supporting the consumption of local/regional food that they aggregate, store, produce, and/or distribute	195
<b>2.</b>	<b>Total number of individuals (culinary professionals, institutional kitchens, entrepreneurs such as kitchen incubators/shared-use kitchens, etc.) reached</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
<b>2.a.</b>	The number that gained knowledge on how to access, produce, prepare, and/or preserve locally and regionally produced agricultural	Not Applicable
<b>2.b.</b>	The number that reported an intention to access, produce, prepare, and/or preserve locally and regionally produced agricultural products	Not Applicable
<b>2.c.</b>	The number that reported supplementing their diets with locally and regionally produced agricultural products that they produced, prepared, preserved, and/or obtained	Not Applicable

**Outcome 2: Increase Customers and sales of local and regional agricultural products.**

Indicator	Description	Number
<b>1.</b>	<b>Sales increased as a result of marketing and/or promotion activities during the project performance period.</b>	
	Original Sales Amount (in dollars)	\$64,225
	Resulted Sales Amount (in dollars) - 2016-2018 average	\$69,991
	Percent Change $((n^{\text{final}} - n^{\text{initial}}) / n^{\text{initial}}) * 100 = \% \text{ change}$	8.98%
	Annual \$ Change from 2016 to 2017	\$22,693
	Annual \$ Change from 2017 to 2018 ** This substantial change is attributed to sporadic reporting from vendors, which was listed as one challenge with this project.	\$-33,852.82
<b>2.</b>	<b>Customer counts increased during the project performance period.</b>	
	Original Customer Count	15,670
	Resulted Customer Count	17,974
	Percent Change $((n^{\text{final}} - n^{\text{initial}}) / n^{\text{initial}}) * 100 = \% \text{ change}$	14.7%

**Outcome 3: Develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets.**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Number of new and/or existing delivery systems/access points of those reached that expanded and/or improved offerings of</b>	
<b>1.a.</b>	Farmers markets	1
<b>1.b.</b>	Roadside stands	Not applicable
<b>1.c.</b>	Community supported agriculture programs	Not applicable
<b>1.d.</b>	Agritourism activities	Not applicable
<b>1.e.</b>	Other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities	Not applicable
<b>1.f.</b>	Local and regional Food Business Enterprises that process, aggregate, distribute, or store locally and regionally produced agricultural products	Not applicable

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Number of local and regional farmers and ranchers, processors, aggregators, and/or distributors that reported</b>	
<b>2.a.</b>	An increase in revenue expressed in dollars	15
<b>2.b.</b>	A gained knowledge about new market opportunities through technical assistance and education programs	229
<b>3.</b>	<b>Number of</b>	
<b>3.a.</b>	New rural/urban careers created (Difference between "jobs" and "careers": jobs are net gain of paid employment; new businesses created or adopted can indicate new careers)	Not applicable
<b>3.b.</b>	Jobs maintained/created	Not applicable
<b>3.c.</b>	New beginning farmers who went into local/regional food production	Not applicable
<b>3.d.</b>	Socially disadvantaged famers who went into local/regional food production	Not applicable
<b>3.e.</b>	Business plans developed	Not applicable

**Outcome 4: Improve the food safety of locally and regionally produced agricultural products.**

*Only applicable to projects focused on food safety!*

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>1.</b>	Number of individuals who learned about prevention, detection, control, and intervention food safety practices	Not Applicable
<b>2.</b>	Number of those individuals who reported increasing their food safety skills and knowledge	Not Applicable
<b>3.</b>	Number of growers or producers who obtained on-farm food safety certifications (such as Good Agricultural Practices or Good Handling Practices)	Not Applicable

**Outcome 5: Increase the amount of SNAP benefits distributed and increase overall awareness of the Double SNAP program.**

Indicator	Description	Number
1.	SNAP benefit dollars used increased	
	Original Sales Amount (in dollars) 2016 - \$3,418	\$3,418
	Resulted Sales Amount (in dollars) 2018 - \$22,565	\$22,565
	Percent Change $((\text{final} - \text{initial}) / \text{initial}) * 100 = \% \text{ change}$	560%
	$((22565 - 3418) / 22,565) * 100$	
	The total increase in dollars was \$19,147.	
2.	Low Income/Low Access residents increased their awareness of SNAP benefits at the Champaign Farmers Market	
	Original Number of LI/LA Residents	79
	Resulted Number of LI/LA Residents	184
	Percent Change $((\text{final} - \text{initial}) / \text{initial}) * 100 = \% \text{ change}$	132.9%

6. Discuss your community partnerships (include applicant staff and external partners).

- i. Who were your community partners?
  - a. City of Champaign Municipal Government, Champaign Center Partnership, Urbana’s Market at the Square, Illinois Stewardship Alliance, Illinois Nutrition Education Programs, Champaign-Urbana Public Health District, Champaign Public Library, First Federal Savings Bank of Champaign-Urbana, University of Illinois Extension SNAP-Ed and Money Mentors, local chefs, local catering companies, Farmers Market Coalition, Food Works, local farmers and agriculture industry leaders, and the Illinois Farmers’ Market Association.
  - b. In addition to our community partners, TLC hosted over 50 local organizations and businesses in our weekly Community Tent, where we offered free space for businesses to interact with market customers and offer information about their programs, services, and opportunities.
  - c. In the 2018 season, we worked with Parkland College’s Applied Media Productions—a student-run public relations group that provides students with valuable real-world marketing and design experience for local non-profits. We worked with the students on a targeted campaign to promote SNAP incentives at the Market, providing job training for 5-6 students. We also partnered with Food Works, a southern Illinois farmer training organization for the development and promotion of the *Mastering the Farmers Market* workshop series we held in Mount Vernon. The Farmers’ Market Coalition and Illinois Farmers Market Association helped promote our *Mastering the Farmers Market* webinar series and shared results of our SNAP incentive program through their social media channels
  - d. In 2017 we partnered with First Federal Savings Bank of Champaign-Urbana to launch Market Seedlings, a kid program at the Market. In 2018, we expanded that program through a partnership with our local food co-op, Common Ground Food Co-op. We collaborated with Common Ground in the development of activities and they provided materials and volunteers to run the activities at the market. The Champaign Public Library also continued as a regular Market Seedlings partner, setting up a booth at each Seedlings market and offering free, veggie-themed book giveaways to families.
  - e. TLC expanded our partnership with the University of Illinois Extension SNAP-Ed/Illinois Nutrition Education Programs in 2018. In 2017 they mostly appeared at

the community tent to work with customers, but in 2018 the SNAP-Ed team ran our sampling tent. They prepared recipes from their curriculum, which is geared towards low-income consumers, using produce from our vendors. They also extensively promoted the market and our SNAP incentive programs in the nutrition classes they taught throughout the county. In addition to our sampling program, TLC continued monthly cooking demonstrations with the registered dietician from Harvest Market, highlighting healthy recipes with seasonal ingredients, as well as a local chef and educator who teaches through his business called Breakfast, Life and Dinner.

- f. Illinois Public Media, our local NPR affiliate, increased their presence at the Market. They joined us twice in the Community Tent in 2018 to help promote the Market among their large Central Illinois audience. They also held a remote broadcast from the Market at the end of September 2018, featuring a panel of Market farmers, SNAP customers, and other community members who work on food access.
  - g. In 2018, TLC partnered more closely with the Champaign Center Partnership (CCP), our local downtown business association, on two new programs. The first we called *Meet Your Local Business*, where we invited a different business to join us in the Market's Community Tent on the first Tuesday of each month. The businesses brought along interactive promotional activities to reach new customers. We also put together a Halloween event for our final market of the season. CCP recruited downtown businesses for a trick-or-treating route that started at the market. CCP also provided candy and other giveaways to vendors to provide at their booth for more trick-or-treating. In addition to the trick-or-treating, TLC held a costume contest and partnered with the nearby Children's Science Museum to offer games and activities. The event brought in hundreds of more customers than we typically see in October and Market attendance was nearly double what we had seen most weeks in October.
  - h. TLC was also fortunate to partner with a business directly adjacent to the Market site. They donated storage space throughout the 2017 and 2018 seasons, so that we can store tents, tables, and other supplies and equipment closer to the site. We have continued that partnership into 2019.
- ii. How did they contribute to the overall results of the FMLFPP project?
    - a. The community partners listed above have all supported TLC with volunteer time or advertising to help promote the Market, our SNAP program, and our kid programming. Some have also provided cooking demonstrations, promoted farmer training workshops geared towards market farmers, and shared updates on the market regularly within their networks. Several of our community partners also joined us during the season in our Community Tent, which helped draw their own customers/constituents/partners to the market.
  - iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMLFPP grant?
    - a. In 2019 we have continued nearly all of the partnerships established during 2017 and 2018 for the Market. Community partners continue the work that they committed to in past seasons, though we have worked together to refine beneficial opportunities for both the partner and The Land Connection. We have also added a number of new partners that work towards our objectives of building a sustainable and collaborative marketing campaign and increasing visibility of vendors. These new partners are primarily to draw senior citizens and immigrant populations to the market.

- iv. What feedback have the partners provided (specific comments) about the results of the project?
    - a. TLC received very positive feedback from community partners. The Illinois Farmers' Market Association invited our Market Manager to speak at their 2018 conference about the impact of sampling at farmers markets, as well as how to set up a successful SNAP incentive program for a new market.
    - b. The City of Champaign launched the early stages of a downtown revitalization project that will directly impact the Market site. In extensive surveys conducted by their consultants, the Market was ranked the second most important consideration by the community when it comes to planning the site revamp.
    - c. In 2017, a representative from Illinois Public Media noted the perseverance of TLC staff in building up the Market during this critical third season, saying "It takes time, patience, and buy-in to make a market like yours successful in multiple definitions of the word. Thanks for doing what you do!"
7. How do you plan to publicize the results?
- i. To whom (i.e. people, entities) do you plan to publicize the project results?
    - a. TLC published overall 2017 season results in our Market Annual Report in early 2018.
    - b. TLC's 2018 Market Impact Report was recently finished and distributed to our supporters, though has not been uploaded to our website as we are undergoing development of a new website.
    - c. TLC was accepted to present a poster at the 2018 National Direct Agricultural Marketing Summit in Arlington, Virginia. Our poster highlighted how we have utilized a combination of USDA funded grants (FMPP, FINI, and an Illinois Specialty Crop Block Grant) to support the market. Each of these projects was designed to work with and bolster each other.
    - d. Our consultant's report from this FMPP award will be uploaded to our website in the coming months.
  - ii. When do you plan to publicize the results? \*If you have publicized the results, please 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).
    - a. Our 2017 Market Annual Report was shared at the Illinois Specialty Crop Conference, the Illinois Farmers Market Association Conference, and the Indiana Small Farms Conference. The conference attendees consisted of farmers, market managers, and other food system stakeholders. The report was also shared with Champaign Farmers Market sponsors and community partners.
    - b. The National Direct Agricultural Marketing Summit poster session attendees included market managers and farmers market association directors from across the country, as well as USDA representatives and other food system stakeholders from non-profit and for-profit sectors.
    - c. Our 2018 Market Impact Report was shared at the Illinois Farmers Market Association Conference. It was also sent out to our organization supporters and will be posted on our website in the coming month.
    - d. Our consultant's report from this FMPP award will be uploaded to our website in the coming months.
8. Have you collected any feedback from your community and additional stakeholders about your work?

- i. If so, how did you collect the information?
  - a. Patron surveys at various market days
  - b. Vendor surveys at the end of each market season
  - c. Testimonials from vendors, shoppers, and community supporters during 2018 National Farmers Market Week
  - d. Discussions with community partners before the start of each season
- ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?
  - a. A report from our project's consultant compiles much of the comments provided to TLC through these mediums.
  - b. Highlights from 2018:
    - Despite the plateaued sales in 2018, TLC still received positive feedback from vendors. They noted that this year they observed a noticeable increase in regular customers who shopped at their booths even during undesirable weather conditions.
    - The majority of patrons surveyed stated that thanks to the recipes they tried at the sampling tent, they were more likely to purchase produce from the Market and more likely to cook at home.
    - One of the Market's anchor vendors noted, "[our farm] loves selling at the Champaign Farmers Market because the market managers are committed to improving food access and encouraging healthy eating with an active sampling booth, excellent recipe/cooking instructional cards and a generous and easy-to-use SNAP matching program." Sola Gratia is a local farm and non-profit dedicated to combatting food insecurity in Champaign-Urbana.
    - One of our new vendors this season, Harvest Table Foods, shared that our Market "has a wonderful energy and has been a great venue for meeting people, listening to their stories, and sharing our farm fresh products."
    - A value-added producer selling for her second season at the Market shared, "I love that I can buy my week's worth of fresh local produce easily in Champaign. I love the fantastic group of vendors I am part of. I love that it is small and focused on produce. I love the sampling table! Such great ideas to use the produce I can buy, and local talent! I love that everyone is so kind and wonderful with my daughter."

9. Budget Summary:

- i. As part of the LFPP 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:  Yes
- ii. Did the project generate any income?  Yes  No
  - a. If yes, \$260 generated and how was it used to further the objectives of this project? The \$260 generated from registration fees at workshops went towards purchasing additional supplies for the marketing and outreach campaign in Objective 1 of this award.
- iii. In the table below include the total amount of **federal funds spent** during the grant performance period (**Do not** include matching or in-kind contributions):

Categories	Amount Approved in Budget	Actual Federal Expenditures (Federal Funds ONLY)
Personnel:	\$45,790.00	\$46,883.95
Fringe:	\$12,572.00	\$12,691.79
Contractual:	\$4,200.00	\$1,869.00
Equipment:	n/a	n/a
Travel:	\$382.80	\$320.40

Supplies:	\$5,285.94	\$3,778.74
Other:	\$8,400.00	\$11,093.44
Indirect Costs:	\$7,663.00	\$7,656.42
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$84,293.74</b>	<b>\$84,293.74</b>

- iv. **ONLY for LFPP recipients:** Provide the amount of matching funds/in-kind contributions used during the grant performance period.

Categories	Match Approved in Budget	Actual Match Expenditures
Personnel:		
Fringe:		
Contractual:		
Equipment:		
Travel:		
Supplies:		
Other:		
Indirect Costs:		
<b>TOTAL:</b>		

10. 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).
- Throughout the course of this project, The Land Connection learned how valuable other organizations, businesses, and individuals in our community could be in realizing our objectives. Though we set out to complete the project based on a plan defined in our original project narrative, certain tasks needed to be changed or adapted to fit what was available to us, what our customers wanted, and, ultimately, what worked. The best work we accomplished during the project's timeline happened when we were not necessarily looking to specific organizations or individuals for assistance. For example, TLC intended to grow our sampling operation by utilizing personal chefs. While this is how we started the project, the City of Champaign's Public Health Department changed their permitting rules and we were required to find a new way of achieving our goal. As it turned out, the University of Illinois Extension Office's Illinois Nutrition Education Program was exactly the partnership we needed to present a successful sampling operation to our customers and, looking back, we can't imagine not using them during the Market. This same discovery helped us to make decisions with how we marketed to low-income/low-access households, as well as how we navigated difficulties getting print articles published about the Champaign Farmers Market.
- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:
- TLC did not launch the vendor profile campaign as originally intended. We first made a vendor listing on our website to test traffic. When we noted that traffic was not high for this particular Champaign Farmers Market page, we decided to highlight vendors through social media and the newsletter. These avenues seemed to have higher engagement.

- TLC was unable to create media contacts that resulted in three print articles published about the Market. Due to the work we did trying to pursue this goal, we found ourselves making connections with other media outlets that led us to live broadcasts at the Market, additional advertising, and more. We learned from this that success is in promotion of the market and not necessarily an exact form of media.
  - TLC did not pursue a direct mailer targeting low-income/low-access families in 2018. In 2017, we received a number of returned postcards and felt that our best use of funding for this element of the project was through other advertising options. Our partners helped us to understand that the city does not have an efficient way of updating mailing addresses, and therefore, there would always be a significant amount of returned postcards.
  - TLC needed to alter how we proceeded with cooking demonstrations and sampling operations due to changes in public health requirements for our city. This was a scary moment for us that turned into a positive change in our market when our partner the Illinois Nutrition Education Program through U of I's Extension Office was able to step in and assist.
  - Gathering survey data from customers at the market and sales data from vendors was difficult and it took TLC a number of iterations to start moving in the right direction. Technology definitely helped us overcome a number of hurdles, but we still have not defined the "best" way to achieve optimum results from both of these data points.
  - Our organization is gathering data from a number of workshops geared towards business training for farmers that in-person workshops are not always a well-attended training. Through the results we gained from this project, we began experimenting with webinars and online courses, which we have found are seeing more traffic than in-person workshops. This does add an element we have not figured out how to navigate with 100% success, which is getting webinar viewers to take a post-workshop survey.
  - Finally, though we did indicate in our initial narrative that the number of direct and indirect jobs retained and created were estimated, we do want to emphasize that we could not find a way to track this data accurately. We know that jobs were retained and created through the work we did in this project, we just cannot quantify that number accurately.
- 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:
- TLC learned the importance of developing a matrix of objectives, outcomes, and indicators for a project of this size, as well as a timeline and internal reporting structure. In other words, a project management plan. Unfortunately, during the course of this project, our nonprofit saw a number of staff changes, which led to us needing to relearn the progress of the project. A document with this information is incredibly beneficial to the health of the project and for the staff involved. A document with monthly updates of project progress towards outcomes and indicators, as well as a centralized, electronic location for all content allowed for ease of transfer of the project.
- iv. Discuss if and how the result of this project can be adapted to other regions, communities, and/or agricultural systems.
- The work The Land Connection has done with low-income/low-access families

and individuals at the Champaign Farmers Market is work that could easily be adapted into other regions or communities. One of the most positive elements we discovered through this project is the need for strong partnerships to accomplish the work. Further, we found that with work targeting low-income/low-access households, utilizing partners outside of the food system was more beneficial than those within our local food system. The elements of our Market programming that would be easily adapted are the marketing strategies and sampling/cooking demonstration operation.

- The workshops presented on Mastering the Farmers Market to help train farmers in business operations were successful once moved into an electronic format. TLC found that more farmers could be reached in our area through webinars and that many viewed the webinars after they were posted for viewing on our website. Choosing content that can benefit a large audience and then making it easily accessible was the key to our workshop series' success.

11. Future Work:

- i. How will you continue the work of this project beyond this grant? In other words, how will you implement 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.
  - The Champaign Farmers Market is thriving and looking forward to a bright future. Funding from the Farmers Market Promotion Program assisted The Land Connection in paving the way for the future of our projects at the Market. We are proud to state that in almost every indicator of the grant's success we met or exceeded our intended outcomes and have since set new goals to strive to reach in the coming years. More specifically, TLC plans to continue our work through the following ways:
    - Champaign County health agencies have put together a plan for our community that addresses obesity as a major health concern. Through connections and partnerships made during this project, The Land Connection has taken a large role in the elements of the plan that address food insecurity and eating healthy, nutritious foods. Our work we set out to accomplish during this grant proposal helped us discover new ways that we could reach low-income/low-access populations in our community, but also helped us to learn more about these populations and the importance our Market had in their lives. Because of our success, we were able to contribute to the long-term health and wellness of our community through the implementation of a number of health initiatives. Through this way, our project and the Champaign Farmers Market will continue to have a tremendous impact on our community.
    - As mentioned throughout, TLC learned a number of lessons during the 2.5 years this project was in place. In terms of marketing and outreach, TLC learned that this is an ever-changing landscape. What worked in year one is not necessarily the right decision for year two or year three. It has been our responsibility to continue evaluating our methods, working with partner organizations, consulting media outlets, etc. to choose the most impactful methods of advertising the Market. Changes we have already begun to make in 2019 including translating our advertising materials into multiple languages, working to find realistic

transportation solutions for those without a car, including a mobile clinic once a month, and partnering with new agencies to build Market programming.

- Though we do not have plans to expand the Champaign Farmers Market to multiple sites and do intend to keep it in one location, we are actively working to increase foot traffic. Our belief is that the more customers we can bring to the one location, the more business the vendors will have, the more opportunity for more vendors we will create, and that ultimately builds the number of jobs retained and created. This is a long-term goal for our organization and this project allowed us to take real steps towards achieving what we have set out to accomplish.
  - Finally, we learned that engaging programming, like cooking demonstrations, helps consumers increase their fresh food purchases at the market. This is an area of the project that we intend to expand over the coming years.
- 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?
- The Land Connection is currently working to bring low-income/low-access families and individuals to our Market to enjoy the benefits of fresh, locally grown, nutritious produce. In 2019, TLC partnered with a local hospital to station their mobile clinic at our market one week each month. The mobile clinic offers an array of medical services and will provide an opportunity for people to grocery shop and visit a primary care in one stop. Additionally, TLC has adopted a number of new data tracking points for determining the needs of our customers, specifically those utilizing SNAP benefits and incentives at the market. We are also working to partner with health and human service agencies, as well as area churches to coordinate better methods of transportation to and from the Market to those in need. Finally, TLC has begun outreach specific to WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program recipients that will help grow the food budgets of populations we haven't previously targeted.