

**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>	Sept. 30, 2014 – Mar. 31, 2017
Authorized Representative Name:	Heidi Chay
Authorized Representative Phone:	(907) 283-8732 x5
Authorized Representative Email:	kenaiswcd@gmail.com
Recipient Organization Name:	Kenai Soil & Water Conservation District
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Kenai Peninsula Market Farmers Development Project
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-FMPPX-AK-0002
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Kenai, Alaska
Total Awarded Budget:	\$83,873

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 1:** To expand the number of viable farm businesses on the Kenai Peninsula marketing directly to consumers.

Progress Made: In the fall of 2014, we surveyed small-scale producers with at least 3 years of high tunnel experience (i.e. producers most likely to be in business or develop farm businesses) to establish a baseline and assess needs. We used Survey Monkey with phone follow-up to those who didn't take the survey on-line and got 100% participation from the 28 targeted. We announced the survey by email.

- Main survey findings: Strong interest in workshops on farm business development and farm production methods; preference for in-person events over on-line forums to exchange ideas; 61% (17 of 28 respondents) were selling produce, 39% (11 of 28) planned to expand.
- The survey validated the project goal of offering farm business development workshops to the broader community. Over the next two years, we hosted six events that included information on farm budgeting, risk management, taxes, marketing and business communication. For the small handful of multi-generational farms in our area, we hosted a workshop on farm transition planning.

Impact on Community: Around 100 producers and potential producers participated in the various workshops and quite a few of them have started or expanded their direct marketing since the start of this project. We learned from participant feedback that networking is often as valuable as an “expert speaker,” which caused us to steadily increase the proportion of networking time at events.

- **Goal 2:** To facilitate the development of farmers markets, CSAs and other direct marketing venues.

Progress Made: In early 2015, we partnered with Central Peninsula Garden Club to host a full-day Farmers Market Roundtable targeting beginning vendors and gardeners in the process of scaling up to direct marketing (see flyer and agenda in Appendix). We did an abbreviated version of the same event in early 2016 and helped organize a statewide conference for farmers market vendors in early 2017, partnering with USDA grantees in the nearby town of Homer.

- We supported the development of [Farmers Fresh Market](#) at the Kenai Peninsula Food Bank by facilitating organizational meetings, hiring a manager, and helping with advertising. The market is the area's only food-focused farmers market.
- In order to encourage farmers markets and vendors to increase EBT program participation, we hosted an information session for farmers market managers,

included this topic at the Farmers Market Roundtable and distributed registration information to vendors.

- With financial support from the local garden club, we organized six “Chef at the Market” cooking demonstrations per season at multiple markets. These events featured amateur chefs who each received a stipend of \$100, part of which went to purchase items at the market for use in demonstrations.

Impact on Community: The four Central Peninsula farmers markets present in 2014 are holding steady or have expanded. CSA’s listed in the [Kenai Loves Local Food Directory](#) have increased from one (2014) to four (2017).

- In 2017, Farmers Fresh Market will become the first Central Peninsula farmers market to accept EBT cards.
- Our portable kitchen kit (folding tables, propane tank, gas burner, handwashing station, tote containing cutting boards, bleach, soap, towels, “Chef at the Market” banner and 2-3 oz. paper “taster” cups, etc.) is now available to any farmers market.

- **Goal 3:** To cultivate community support for Kenai Peninsula food, forage and fiber producers.

Progress Made: We developed outreach literature and displays. These included: a postcard (“Who Says You Can’t Farm in Alaska?”) with facts and trends regarding Kenai Peninsula farm production, farmers markets and the positive impact of buying local, a large folding display board “Nine Fine Ways to Increase Alaska’s Food Security and Support Sustainable Agriculture” (poster version available upon request) and the [Kenai Loves Local Food Directory](#). We took these items to high traffic events like the Kenai River Festival, Annual Home Show, Ninilchik Fair and Harvest Moon Local Food Festival.

- We gave presentations (e.g. Chamber of Commerce, League of Women Voters, and public radio) to highlight local food and farming.
- We made it easy for reporters to cover local food knowledgeably by distributing an annual press release with key facts, figures and developments.
- We also maintained the [Kenai Local Food Facebook page](#) and promoted events (e.g. Harvest Moon Local Food Week, Harvest Moon Farm Tour, Annual Fiber Arts Festival) via Facebook, radio and newspaper to build public support for food, forage and fiber producers.

Impact on Community:

- Community awareness and support for direct market farmers has increased to the point where 600 customers have registered with a new on-line farmers market (Kenai Peninsula Food Hub).
- In early 2016, the local newspaper started including agriculture in [its annual economic trends report](#).
- The Kenai Peninsula Borough (pop. 57,000) will include agriculture for the first time as a section of the Borough Comprehensive Plan to be completed 2017-2018.

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, 2014). Include further explanation if necessary.

- Number of direct jobs created: 18+ seasonal jobs
 - Data is incomplete and difficult to collect. Most market farms surveyed are operated by the owners with no additional staff. However 13% of farmers we surveyed (3 of 23) in 2015 said workers increased from 2014-2015. The remainder reported no change. In early 2017, three of the area's largest market farms reported adding a total of 12 seasonal jobs from 2014-2016. In addition, 6 of 23 producers surveyed in late 2016 reported that 2016 was their first year of sales.
 - Number of jobs retained: est. 60+ seasonal jobs
 - Data is incomplete and difficult to collect. Most market farms surveyed are operated by the owners with no additional staff.
 - Number of indirect jobs created: unknown
 - Number of markets expanded: 2
 - Farmers Fresh Market at Kenai Peninsula Food Bank expanded from 8 vendors (5 full-season/3 partial) in 2013 to 14 vendors (9 full-season/5 partial) in 2016. This project indirectly benefited Soldotna Wednesday Market which grew from 0 vendors in 2013 to a major visitor attraction in the heart of Soldotna with dozens of food trucks, craft vendors, live music and a small, steady handful of produce vendors.
 - Number of new markets established: 0
 - Market sales increased by \$unknown and increased by unknown%.
 - Data is incomplete and difficult to collect. However, 56% of farmers surveyed in late 2015 and late 2016 reported their sales had increased from the previous year. Average increase reported in 2015 was 25%, and in 2016, some farmers reported that sales doubled over the previous year.
 - Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 55+ (including farmers/producers in the start-up phase)
 - Percent Increase: 83%. In 2014, we knew of 30 farmers producing food, fiber and forage (specifically weed-free forage). In 2016, we know of at least 55.
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?
- Yes. In 2017 Farmers Fresh Market at Kenai Peninsula Food Bank will become the first Central Peninsula market with a SNAP card reader to benefit low-income shoppers. We partnered with Kenaitze Indian Tribe's Dena'ina Wellness Center and Kenai Peninsula Food Bank to distribute the Local Food Directory and host an annual Harvest Moon Local Food Festival. We also target newcomers and visitors by distributing the Local Food Directory at visitors' centers and realty offices.
4. Discuss your community partnerships.

- We partnered with the Kenai Peninsula Foundation, Kenai Peninsula Food Bank, the Dena'ina Wellness Center, Ionia Inc. and individual members of the grassroots Kenai Local Food Connection to create and distribute the “Kenai Loves Local Food Directory, “offer farm tours and host the annual Harvest Moon Local Food Festival. We partnered with Soldotna Chamber of Commerce, Central Peninsula Hospital, Kenai Watershed Forum and dozens of business locations to distribute the directory more widely than ever before. The Kenai Peninsula Farm Bureau, Central Peninsula Garden Club, Kenai Local Food Connection, Cooperative Extension Service, Homer Soil & Water Conservation District and Sustainable Homer have helped organize, sponsor and/or promote various events and workshops made possible by this grant. Additional organizations hosted presentations and displays including League of Women Voters, Kenai Chamber of Commerce, Kenai Feed & Supply, Kenai Peninsula College and Kenai Change.
 - We expect to continue working with all these partners going forward.
5. Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the FMPP project? *Not applicable.*
6. Have you publicized any results yet?*
- As examples of project results, we are attaching copies of our presentation on Rapid Market Assessment at the 2015 Farmers Market Roundtable, our 2016 press release, the 2016 “Kenai Loves Local Food Directory” and articles from the local newspaper.
7. Have you collected any feedback from your community and additional stakeholders about your work?
- We collected feedback from participants in workshops supported by this grant.
 - As an example, we are attaching survey results from our February, 2015 Farmers Market Roundtable, a full-day workshop attended by 45+ current and potential farmers market vendors. 95% of respondents said workshop was “very useful” (73%) or “somewhat useful” (23%).
8. Budget Summary:
- 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:
 - Did the project generate any income? *Not applicable*
9. Lessons Learned:
- i. General:
 - a. Always work with partners and share credit for your shared successes. The Kenai Loves Local Food Directory is one example.
 - b. When new opportunities arise, take them! When we heard that people in Homer (90 minutes away) were organizing a statewide farmers market conference, we joined their effort rather than try to put on a competing event. That way, our resources could go elsewhere, e.g. into organizing a series of three Farmers & Chefs networking events. When a group in Homer got a grant

to pilot on an on-line farmers market, we joined them and doubled the geographic scope of the project.

- c. Network, network, network! We have learned that the most valuable part of any educational event we organize for market farmers is the networking that takes place outside the formal presentations. We have gradually shifted our approach toward events that are explicitly FOR networking, e.g. the three Farmers & Chefs networking events we held last winter.
- ii. Goals or outcome measures not achieved:
 - a. We tried to do a LOT within the scope of this project and had many mutually-reinforcing successes as a result. However, one item fell through the cracks. We did not conduct surveys of farmers market shoppers in 2015 and 2016 as we had planned. We found that with Chef at the Market events, farm tour and Harvest Moon Local Food Festival, there was too much going on at that time of the year to also conduct the survey without additional staff. Nevertheless, we highly recommend the “Rapid Assessment Method” for conducting market surveys, which we used in 2013 and 2014.
(See http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/sites/default/files/small-farms-tech-report/eesc_1088-e.pdf)
- iii. Project administration:
 - a. With any multi-year project of this scope, project administrators should clearly identify desired data, set up data collection tools (e.g. spreadsheet) before the project commences, and use them consistently throughout the life of the project.

10. Future Work:

- In 2017-2018, we are planning a series of networking events to continue to connect small farmers with local restaurants and commercial buyers and start building a new bridge between small farmers and our thriving local visitor industry.
- Restaurant owners have requested easier ways to promote their local food sources, so we will create a website where they can instantly download photos and farm stories for their suppliers to create tabletop displays and menu inserts.
- We will continue to conduct public outreach on behalf of market farmers, e.g. through the Local Food Directory and presentations to the Chambers of Commerce.
- We will work with the Kenai Peninsula Borough comprehensive planning process to make sure that it includes practical goals and objectives to protect agricultural land and promote the development of market farming.

11. Selected Media Coverage of the Project:

<http://peninsulaclarion.com/news/2015-02-11/farmers-market-roundtable-provides-networking-and-education#>

<https://redoubtreporter.wordpress.com/2015/12/23/growing-the-economy-agriculture-flourishing-on-kenai-peninsula/>

<http://peninsulaclarion.com/news/2015.../alaskas-agricultural-renaissance>

<http://peninsulaclarion.com/news/2016-07-28/food-directory-helps-support-local-farms>

<http://peninsulaclarion.com/news/2016-04-26/food-hub-offers-local-shopping-online>

FARMERS MARKET ROUNDTABLE



Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2015

9 am to 4 pm

**at Cook Inlet Aquaculture Assoc.
on K-Beach Road, Kenai**

**No charge. Lunch provided.
To register, call 283-8732 x5**

Scaling Up: Ready for the farmers market?

Are you a successful gardener thinking about marketing your produce? Or are you already in the market and want to learn more tips of the trade? This one-day event is for market farmers, farmers market managers and anyone interested in Alaska's rapidly developing farmers market scene.

Featuring Guest Speakers:

Arthur Keyes, South Anchorage Farmers Market and Glacier Valley Farm
Amy Pettit, Alaska Division of Agriculture

**...and info on planning, marketing, food safety, local markets...
Everything you need to know to get started!**

Sponsors:



USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program



FARMERS MARKET ROUNDTABLE

“Scaling Up: Ready for the Farmers Market?” – Feb. 11, 2015

9 - 9:15	Welcome , <i>Heidi Chay</i> , Kenai Soil & Water Conservation District
9:15 - 10:15	Farmers Market Tips for Success , <i>Arthur Keyes</i> , South Anchorage Farmers Market, and <i>Amy Pettit</i> , Alaska Division of Agriculture
10:15 - 10:30	Introducing Our Local Markets
10:30 - 10:45	Meet and Greet <i>by geographical area</i>
10:45 - 12:00	Marketing Your Market , <i>Amy Pettit</i> , Alaska Division of Agriculture and <i>Arthur Keyes</i> , South Anchorage Farmers Market
12:00 - 12:45	Lunch <i>featuring Alaska Grown ingredients</i>
12:45 - 1:15	Business Start-up Basics, and Highlights from 2013/14 Farmers Market Surveys <i>Heidi Chay</i> , Kenai Soil & Water Conservation District
1:15 - 1:40	Increasing Access to Healthy Food: WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Coupons , <i>Erin Khmelev</i> , Farmers Market Nutrition Program Coordinator, Alaska Division of Public Assistance
1:40 - 2:00	Increasing Access: Homer's Experience with SNAP and EBTs , <i>Kyra Wagner</i> , Homer Farmers Market
2:00 - 2:45	Food Safety for Farmers Market Vendors , <i>Melanie Hollon and Heidi Isernhagen</i> , Alaska DEC, Division of Food Safety and Sanitation
2:45 - 3:00	Break
3:00 - 3:45	Roundtable Discussion: Kenai Peninsula Farmers Markets 2020 <i>What's your vision? What's needed to make it happen?</i>
3:45 - 4:00	Feedback and Wrap-up



This event was made possible with assistance from the USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program, Central Peninsula Garden Club, Ridgeway Farms, Alaska Division of Agriculture, Kenai Catering and Artistic Puppy (videography).