

**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 31, 2017
Authorized Representative Name:	Gail Myers
Authorized Representative Phone:	415-374-0608
Authorized Representative Email:	gpmyers@farmstogrow.com
Recipient Organization Name:	Farms to Grow, Inc.
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	African American Freedom Farmers Market Expansion Project
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	15-FMPP-CA0131
Year Grant was Awarded:	2015
Project City/State:	Oakland, CA
Total Awarded Budget:	98278.00

FMPP staff may contact you to follow up for long-term success stories. Who may we contact?

- X Same Authorized Representative listed above (check if applicable).
- Different individual: Name: _____; Email: _____; Phone: _____

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: Develop Market Readiness Training for African American Farmers and Urban Gardeners
 - a. Progress Made: Over 40 African American farmers, gardeners, and potential farmers and gardeners completed a 2 1/2-hour training increasing their knowledge of farmers’ market readiness.
 - b. Impact on Community: This goal of training the farmers had a remarkable impact on the farming communities in the Central Valley, Sacramento Valley/Stockton, and in Oakland, CA. The rural farmers in Fresno, Bakersfield, Modesto, and other small towns learned how to get registered to set up and sell produce at a state farmers market. Of the 40 trainees, in three locations, the training facilitated the set up of 10 new farmers in gardeners. Of the remaining 30 trainees, their issues ranged from waiting to retire, needing to get vehicles, needing to get other resources to grow produce. The Oakland trainees were also interested in value added products and only grew small niche veggies. They too had issues with getting equipment and resources to sell at a farmers market. By and large though, most of the rural California African American farming community who have land, have gained valuable skills and knowledge about how to prepare, setup, and participate fully in farmer’s market venues. Whether or not the farmers vended in this 2-year program with Freedom Farmers Market, they gained and still have skills and knowledge of sales that can be used in their own rural counties to sustain them. The farmers that have begun participating in the farmers market have gained more access to consumers and increased revenue through farmers’ markets sales. The community has had more access to affordable fresh culturally specific food and this has increased their consumption of fresh produce. These participating farmers increased their revenue because they participated in the Freedom farmers market and the off-season CSA. The general public now has an expectation that African American farmers will be part of their farmer’s market landscape.
 - ii. Goal/Objective 2: Increase direct to consumer market opportunities for African American and other farmers of color by doubling the number of participating farmers & vendors in the existing Oakland-based Freedom Farmers Market, increasing the number of months the market is operating, and by establishing a new market targeting the 60,000 Peralta Community College District students at the Laney College Campus and recruiting up to 20 African American farmers and 10 healthy food vendors to participate in that new market
 - a. Progress Made: Farms to Grow had worked with the Laney College Office of Sustainability for two years before being approached by them to consider opening a farmers market at Laney College. We met with the student body leaders, the offices of Student Affairs to craft out a farmers market plan involving mostly students. We received a letter of support and commitment from the college and all indications seemed solid to move the farmers market forward pm the college campus. However, there was a change in several administrative

positions at Laney College for the first 6 months of the project, the College was hiring an interim/new president, new deans, new Student Affairs Director. Consequently, the administration put the students on hold and after one year, there were discussions of moving the Oakland A's stadium near the campus and all new projects were ceased. Needless to the project we *continued to encounter delays with Laney College*. Before the grant awarded, during the time we were meeting with administrative staff and students, all indications were that this would be a student run market. What the new administration objected to was the idea that each year there are new students and had to start from scratch with information about the farmers market. However, with the college student's invitations, we continued to have a presence on the campuses of over 30,000 students where we educated students, marketed and advertised to them about the existing markets and special events. The new market never materialized for logistical reasons, including lack of administrative support when project began.

The goal 2 of extending the market season was hampered by the Laney College market setback. However, the market provided produce to student run events. The project also accomplished setting up two new pop up markets in the summer months during cultural events for two years (Black Cowboy Festival and the Black Eye Pea Festival). This increased the farmers' annual revenue and provided a marketing and outreach opportunity to advertise the Freedom Farmers market with audiences we had not reached.

b. Impact on Community: Although, the project experienced unexpected delays with the Laney College market due to student retention, as identified by the administration, the project has experienced progress in direct to consumer market opportunities for the African American and other farmers of color. Laney students begin coming to market increasingly in large numbers. As well, out of town and state, and out of the country market shoppers have come to the market from Texas, Colorado, PA, Detroit to use the market as a model of how to reach African American farmers and shoppers and foreign visitors have come after researching Black Farmers Markets on the internet. Increasingly the millennial age shoppers have come and told their networks. Because of our different monthly events, for example, the Watermelon Eating Contest, different markets are coming, those who look for food contests. In general, the FFM has broadened its base and outreach to more African Americans, Native Americans, continental Africans, and other ethnic groups shopping for familiar fresh food and a unique experience with knowing your farmer. Community members continue to engage in the creation of their own local food system led by the members of the local community. More residents from churches and organizations have contacted Farms to Grow to provide produce, nutritional information, and presentations, and sampling opportunities. Local churches and community associations have been actively planning for their own nutrition and food needs using African American and other farmers of color, Asian and Latin farmers. The project has had an impact on the farmers' ability to plan for increased production. All ten farmers continue to grow more and talk of expanding onto other farm and urban land. We have given hope for increased revenue and relationship building for our farmers. Oakland continues to buzz about the niche market and people mention their appreciation for bringing the foods to them and the alternative narratives to farmers in California. The cultural impact on the local food system has been tremendous. African American consumers from San Francisco, over 7 miles away, Stockton, over 50 miles away have shopped at the market because of the farmers market diversity of farmers and consequently the diversity of fresh food, including peas that are only grown by black farmers, for example, crowder and purple hulls. The two new farm

stand pop ups with two annual events, Black Cowboy Festival and Black Eyed Pea Festival increased the access to fresh food for those in food deserts. The producers realized extra revenue at these two events as there were upward of 2000 people at the two events.

iii. Goal/Objective 3: *Expand the consumer base at both markets and make culturally relevant food available for Oakland's low wealth African American residents by welcoming payment with Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT).*

- a. Progress Made: Over the two years, the use of the EBT payments to purchase produce increased the participation and regular shopping by 25% from the 2014 year shoppers purchasing culturally relevant fresh food.
- b. Impact on Community: This impacted the community by providing greater access to fresh foods for those low income and senior residents and impacted the farmers by increased revenue generation during the nonmarket months. We also expanded access to EBT customers. Through a partnership the Interfaith Initiative, the market was able to provide market match for EBT customers. Most of the repeat EBT shoppers really appreciated and took full advantage of this opportunity. This also impacted two farmers who decided to get their own EBT machines in case they set up at a church event.
Presenting opportunities to connect the larger community with Black farmers has motivated consumers to eat their culturally relevant foods and celebration of African American food ways. We have seen new shoppers coming from areas around Oakland to purchase the black eye peas, okra, yams, collard greens, and other produce. The community has been reconnected with foods of their past and have learned about the Black farmers in the process. The local neighborhood has felt safer on Saturdays since the farmers market has been located at the Telegraph Community Center. More of the local businesses have begun to purchase foods from the farmers at the Freedom farmers market. We have gatherings from nutrition training, to live performances, to book giveaways that have added more value to the lives of these customers. We have seen more mothers bringing small age children to hang out in a safe environment. We provide chess, checkers, and dominoes in our food court area and elders and families stay for hours listening to the music, talking to the farmers and the other shoppers.

iv. Goal/Objective 4: Marketing and Promotional Campaign

- a. Progress Made: We have developed the "Like it Fresh" campaign and it has taken on a citywide appeal with youth, Millennials, and elderly. We have produced two major newsletters over the last year that have reached over 4000 readers, based on social media clicks.
- b. Impact on Community: Increased the messaging to over 4000 community members about the fresh produce of Black Farmers and purchasing from local farmers to maintain health and healthy local economy. Community exposed to educational information through shopping at the farmers market, which resulted from increase in marketing and promotional campaign. More youth have been engaged, secondary through college age with the market over the last 6 months. Each week youth gather at the market and have lunch, play board games, and talk with farmers. Also, with regard to the church community, we have also noticed that at the church events where we have spoken and done outreach, over the 2 years prior to the

receiving the grant, these same events include more fresh salads, fruits, and few canned or frozen foods. People are asking for food directly from the farmers at these church events where we have done outreach.

V. Goal/Objective 5: Continue Existing Market Off Season Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

- a. Progress Made: The project also expanded the market customer base by providing Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) boxes during months the market is off season to four new low-income locations, San Francisco's Bayview Hunters Point, Marin City in Marin County, as well a food cooperative and a yoga studio. We expanded the CSA locations by 400%, from one location to four locations for the grant period years. This increased the CSA participation from 20 boxes to 60 boxes each week. During the project, we partnered with three groups that will served as drop-off locations for the CSA. The locations are all low income serving facilities, 2 clinics and one senior center. We have heard from those ordering that they have not had such care for their nutrition needs from Black Farmers in particular.
- b. Impact on Community: More diverse members of the African American communities are accessing fresh food from African American farmers. The boxes come with recipes and we hear from the subscribers that they appreciate the recipe suggestion. We have also contributed to the continuity of relationships with our shoppers year-round as we have contact with them year-round and they eat healthier all year round.

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: 4
- ii. Number of jobs retained: 2
- iii. Number of indirect jobs created: 8
- iv. Number of markets expanded: 3 new drop off locations
- v. Number of new markets established: 0
- vi. Market sales increased by \$20000 and increased by 60%.
- vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project:
 - a. Percent Increase: 60%

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?

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4. Discuss your community partnerships.
 - i. Who are your community partners?
 - ii. Telegraph Community Center, African American Farmers Association, African American Museum and Library, Black Urban Farmers Association, Magnolia Wellness Center, Phat Beets, Bay Area Organizations for Black Business, Richmond Farmers Market Association, Center for Elder Independence, Marin City Health Clinic, Bayview Community Health Clinic, Mills College, Laney College, Richmond Farmers Market, Alameda County Public Health, Marin County Public Health, Black Cowboys Association, Omnira Institute, Hack the Hood, Mandela Food Cooperative.
 - iii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the FMPP project? These organizations have helped to recruit farmers and customers by assisting with marketing and sharing the story of the Freedom Farmers Market. Each one of these allow us to place fliers in their locations and meet with their constituents to do cooking demos and talk outreach for the Freedom Farmers Market. Some of these organizations provide volunteers and musicians for the market. These organizations have also helped to recruit subscribers to the CSA program. Public Health Depts. provided literature and recipes for distribution and at to carry when outreaching in the community.
 - iv. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMPP grant? They will continue to collaborate with us expanding our reach to low-income consumers and farmers. Center for Elder Independence has helped us reach elderly and shut in who will be outreached for our CSA boxes to be delivered to their homes and apartments. Several will serve as drop off locations and sign up new CSA subscribers. Since these entities are involved in the community daily, we have encouraged these groups to do for them, we have seen these organizations engage in more conversations around food.
5. Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the FMPP project? Yes, we used contractors to collect the data surveys from farmer training, from the farmers market and from our farmers, marketing, and video graphing our training. We use contractor to develop and design our marketing and outreach materials, train and meet with communities hard to reach. Their work has added more information, broadened our outreach to low-income consumers, and professionalized our image as a small farmers market. We are also networking through the marketing outlets known to the marketing specialist; this has helped us reach those not usually shopping at farmers markets. Contractors have a wealth of knowledge and resources that has benefitted this project immensely. They have opened new doors, follow up and follow through on media communications, identifying funding resources, creating agendas for meetings, researching areas for farmers needing resources to continue to participate in the market.
6. Have you publicized any results yet?*

 - i. If yes, how did you publicize the results? Yes, we have published the outcome of the trainings in past newsletters, we have shared in public venues speaking about the market on panels, and presentations.
 - ii. To whom did you publicize the results? New Hope Baptist Church, Board of directors, numerous presentations.
 - iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? 2000

*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? Yes, we collected feedback from the Market sign in/comment sheets each week.
 - ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?
 1. Overwhelmingly people thank us for bringing black farmers to Oakland and providing affordable fresh foods.
 2. People sign up to volunteer at the market and other locations because they believe in the market.
 3. People want to learn more about African American farmers and their farming histories.
 4. People are interested in a year round relationship so they sign up for the CSA program.

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: X
 - ii. Did the project generate any income?
 - a. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award? The project generated 4800 from weekly fees from farmers and vendors. The CSA generated more revenue for farmers, over 6500 was paid to farmers and prepared food vendors. The farmers used their income to cover cost. The market used the income generated to pay staff, transportation to pick up produce, market costs exceeding the budget.

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). Not opening of the Laney market was a setback. We learned that when working with colleges or universities, get the county level sign on from the County Administration in addition to the college. We also learned that for most African American farmers, their capacity to participate in a farmers is a several year technical assistance endeavor/process. The majority of those attending the training had various issues that prevented them from timely participation in the market. Some may be ready in 2 to 4 years after more resources and time are available. They have the interest but lack the capacity, even with the Readiness Training.
 - ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving: Again, the goal of the getting the Laney College market open was ambitious but, it never materialized. Some things are just beyond your control.
 - 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: Keep good records and maintain regular meetings with all entities involved in the project. Get media involved in the project as early and as often as possible. We learned that the social media worked some of the folks some of the time but for the subgroups-demographic we aimed to reach, elders, churches, many were not involved extensively with social

media. In other words, for communities of color, there is also a need to go to the traditional sources, print, radio, door fliers, etc., in addition to social media.

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. We are in the process of training more farmers, reconnecting with farmers from the trainings to inquire about their status and keep encouraging to setup at the farmers market. We will work with the festivals to have a permanent presence and part of their marketing materials. We plan to set up an additional market at a church parking lot. This is more than certain to open in 2018. All of the CSA relationships continue to expand and introduce more farmer products from produce from farmers receiving training but cannot set up for various reasons. We plan to set up more CSA locations and drop off and pursue outreach opportunities to present information about Black farmers. Mostly, the community has seen this market as an institution and will keep it going.
- 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? This kind of work is a long distance race and results may continue to unfold years from now. We see these farmers expanding their growing space and so we expect more produce coming to the market each season. However, some of these farmers continue to be impacted by land access, and operating costs which may eventually prohibit them from growing produce.