

**Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)
Final Performance Report**

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Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	September 30, 2014 – September 30, 2016
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Recipient Organization Name:	City of Winnsboro
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Grow the Market – Winnsboro Texas
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-FMPPX-TX-0162
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Winnsboro, Texas
Total Awarded Budget:	\$61,869

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: _____

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.*

The goals of “Grow the Market” project are to: increase awareness, visibility, traffic and sales of the Winnsboro Farmers’ Market through expanded general and targeted advertising and outreach to potential customers within our service area; make local, fresh produce available to low-income families by implementing a SNAP acceptance program; and expand the selection and supply of produce and value-added products by providing specialized training to selected, committed existing vendors.

Goal #1: Improve Management Strategy.

Progress Made: The market has been able to remain stable with the opportunity for growth due to the continuation of a paid market manager. The position required 30 hours per week year manage the market. (See managers hours attached log). One board member has been designated as assistant manager to perform routine tasks. This helps the manager devote more time on areas that promote the market.

The SNAP program was initiated and is still a work in progress. We offer our low income citizens an alternative for shopping for fresh and local fruits and vegetables. The market is also developing a special promotion for SNAP customers to double the value of their dollars.

By developing productive relationships and networking with community organization leaders she has identified and created opportunities for collaboration. Numerous community organizations and businesses have joined the market and bring their events to the market location thus increasing attendance and sales not only to the market vendors but also to the downtown merchants and restaurants. (See customer stats attached spreadsheet). This has also had an impact on budgets. We are now sharing expenses by advertising for other organizations and in return other organizations are including the farmers' market in their advertising. As a result there is an increase in advertising without the increased expense.

Membership in peer organizations has led to networking with other market managers and learning about industry trends and how other markets handle specific issues. This helped to align our market rules and regulations to our mission. The market is clearly defined and our rules and regulations reflect our mission and clearly identify our market as a market that offers locally home grown food to promote the local economy and a healthy lifestyle.

We have established a branding and developed a reputation for offering only local home grown food and products. Through an advertising campaign using Facebook Ads, signs, online reward program, newspaper ads, press releases, community calendars, writing weekly columns to profile vendors, personal appearances and participation in other community events to promote the market we become a respected and well known farmers' market.

The Manager and president of the Market's Advisory board attended a conference in Houston held by Hunger free Texas organization. They had a Farmers' Market University which consisted of management classes to earn a certificate. School organizations and hospitals were also highlighted during the conference. There were lots of networking workshops to get people thinking and talking about how farmers' markets can work with and through the school systems and health benefits of hospital programs.

The manager and another vendor who is also a board member received an invitation from the head of the Agricultural Department of Northeast Texas Community College (NTCC) to be part of their committee to conduct a feasibility study for developing a food hub by creating a mobile market in Northeast Texas. As part of that committee they attended a two day workshop on food hubs held at the SSAWG conference in Lexington, Kentucky. After the workshop she attended other classes on developing markets, incentive programs, and food safety.

Impact on Community: A secondary, Monday evening market was created that invited downtown restaurants and businesses to participate, and featured local musical acts in addition to our regular farm product vendors. This increased community participation to the downtown area and increased visibility for the Saturday market as a result. Though the Monday night market was not successful as a farmers' market, it was a successful event that was "spun-off" to the city's Main Street program and continues to be successful.

A variety of community members are coming to the market because of organizations and

businesses who now participate in the farmers' market. They are learning more about what the community offers, helping with charitable organizations, and coming to know the market as a supportive entity of the city. Inviting local churches and community organizations also increases attendance as well as introducing previously-unreached members of the community.

The SNAP program has enabled low income families access to fresh and local foods. This program brought in several new customers to the market, as well as offered some existing customers the ability to purchase fresh farm products using their SNAP benefits.

Goal/Objective #2: Increase Customer and Farmer/Producer Base.

Progress Made: We achieved our goals of increasing our customer base and increasing our farmer/producer base overall. Our customer base increase was due to a number of special events, advertising on Facebook, and collaborating with community organizations to pull in their customer base. (See Customer Statistics spreadsheet). A survey that was conducted shows vendors are satisfied with the market and indicated they had increased sales from 2015 to 2016. (See Vendor Survey spreadsheet).

Some of the key events that had an impact on attendance were:

- A special event on opening day increased our attendance by 140% from 2015 - 2016; that rate continued through the first month of the market.
- We created marketing materials and send out postcards (twice annually) to everyone in our zipcode (approx. 4,500 each mailing) to notify of upcoming events, opening day, etc.
- A local business (Texas Country Ford) sponsors free coffee for customers at the market.
- We designed and purchased various signage and placed throughout the city and at the market increasing visibility. This seems to have been the best use of advertising money as most people surveyed said they heard about the market because of signage. (See attached customer survey document).
- Facebook ads and posts have increased the community's awareness; likes increased by 371.
- Special events throughout the season increased attendance.

Opening Day	140%
Derby Day	42%
Old McDonald Farm Day	58%
- Second Saturday craft day created; increase our vendor base and a new group of customers.

- Polls indicated advertising by signage was the most effective. (See customer survey spreadsheet)
- Increase in business and traffic to downtown merchants.
71% of customers surveyed indicated they planned to shop downtown .

Some of the key elements for an increase in farmers/producers:

- Working with community organizations to create collaboration.
 - More vendors registered because of our reputation of being a good, well attended market.
 - We are a market that spends money and time on advertising.
 - Professionally managed market with trained personnel.
 - Registration fees are reasonable and rules are appropriate
- a) Impact on Community: Increased good will through inviting local charitable and community service organizations, churches, businesses, and school groups. Increase in a variety and quantity of local produce and food products giving customers more access. Nurturing the formation of new, related organizations such as a local beekeeper's club. Fostering start-up agricultural businesses including a new aquaponics vendor.

Goal/Objective #3: Develop Existing and New Farmers/Producers Expand the selection and supply of produce and value-added products by providing specialized training to selected, committed existing vendors.

- Progress Made: We took a weekend off from the market to attend the Mother Earth News Fair last February. Eleven farmers' market vendors traveled together to Belton, Texas to attend this three-day fair/conference and we met up with our other vendors (6) who drove on their own. This was the first year the fair was held in Texas and it was a huge success. We met nightly with the market vendors to discuss what each learned, what they like and didn't like and how they would apply what they learned to their farm/business.
- We recruited and organized a group trip to the Farm and Ranch Freedom Conference held in Bastrop, Texas. This was a two day conference for our farmers/vendors to attend a two day conference about Texas food laws, genetically modified organisms, future of food, activism, available loan and grant programs.

- Adding a 2nd Saturday Craft Day to the market has attracted some new vendor interest and allows us to grow our vendor list. This has been slow to get started and needs more advertising.
- Since we negotiated with the Main Street Program manager to allow our vendors to participate in their Monday Night Live event, this gives vendors a second opportunity to sell their products and the 2nd opportunity of selling has attracted 3 more vendors.
- We decided to keep the winter market going to attract farmers/vendors and offer them an opportunity to sell throughout the year. We advertised and held the market on the patio of a popular coffee shop but this year's vendors did not have the supply of produce that we had the previous year. While last year's winter market was successful, the 2016 winter market was not. Future winter markets will depend upon the ability and desire of vendors to increase their year-round production.
- We arranged a special two day Farmers Market to coincide with the Winnsboro Four Corners Foundation's annual Art Fair fundraiser for 2015 and 2016. This offered another selling opportunity to our vendors and was successful the first year for some of our vendors but not others depending on what they were offering to this art crowd. However, the 2016 saw more sales due to an adjustment in offering items that the art & wine crowd might be interested in.

Impact on Community:

- Increased access to healthy local food.
 - By increasing more varieties of fruits and vegetables this gives consumers for food choices for buying local and eating locally grown food. Having regular customers encourages our existing vendors to increase their production as well as experimenting with new crops and value-added product.
- Increase in farmer yields provides increased quantities of fruits and vegetables to the community.
 - One farmer that attended our education opportunity has had problems with several of her crops and as a result of what she learned she has improved her yields. She has changed to wood mulch; she was fertilizing too late in the season; and planting fruit trees too deep. She is also implementing cover crops. Connecting our growers to educators and experts with local and regional experience and knowledge through these educational opportunities not only assures their success, but also improves their profitability. This translates to benefits for our customers and the community at large.
- Bring awareness to local issues and enable the consumer to participate on a local community level.
 - One success story with one of our honey vendors was when he attended a weeklong conference on bees and beekeeping. He came away from that conference with a new understanding of the bee crisis and changed his methods to organic. He provided education at his booth and brought awareness to the community by hosting an art contest to creatively paint

beehives. This brought nationwide attention in magazines. Citizens met and formed a county beekeeping association that is successfully educating the public. This event also gained the attention of the American Federation of Beekeepers, which featured our honey producer in an issues of their association's magazine.

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.

- a. Number of direct jobs created: 0
- b. Number of jobs retained: 1
- c. Number of indirect jobs created: 0
- d. Number of markets expanded: 0
- e. Number of new markets established: 1
- f. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 20

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?

We expanded our customer base when we offered the SNAP program; however due to technical issues and lack of advertising directly to our target market we had little start up success with SNAP. When customers were not able to use our SNAP equipment they did not return. Our plan is to investigate the issue for next season and focus on advertising to reach low income families.

Discuss your community partnerships.

Who are your community partners?

Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Merchants Association, Autumn Trails, Main Street Program, and Four Corners Foundations, Texas County Ford, Lone Republic Steak House, Brewbakers, Winnsboro Center for the Arts, Food Pantry, Rooster Café, Art & Espresso, Wood County Beekeepers Association, American Legion, and Master Gardeners.

How have they contributed to the overall results of the FMPP project?

Working with our community partners has had a positive effect on the markets budget. By sharing advertising we have increased exposure to the public while not increasing dollars spent. Other community partners are including the farmers' market in their advertising and we are doing the same.

How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMPP grant?

The community organizations will continue to participate in the Saturday market and will be exposed to the citizens in attendance (an average of 350) each Saturday. They will sell their products or promote their organizations enabling them to grow their memberships and/or increase their fund raising efforts.

We will continue to share budgets and advertise for other organizations and they will advertise for the farmers' market.

We will contact the Wood County Judicial system to seek volunteers for the market, using citizens that need to volunteer to meet their community service hours in exchange for minor offenses like excess speeding tickets.

Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the FMPP project? Not applicable.

Have you publicized any results yet?* No, not yet, however; we will provide a report at the January City Council meeting.

Have you collected any feedback from your community and additional stakeholders about your work?
No

If so, how did you collect the information? Not Applicable

What feedback was relayed (specific comments)? Not Applicable

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? No, not applicable.

If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award?

Lessons Learned:

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).

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

Describe any lessons learned in the administration of the project that might be helpful for others who would want to implement a similar project:

We learned what advertising efforts worked best by polling customers. This will help in future budgeting. I would continue to poll on a monthly basis. In hindsight, keeping track of the weather would help when looking at weekly attendance numbers. Also list other events that were taking place to see if our attendance might have been affected by neighboring communities.

Education dollars were well spent on the manager however; education for farmers did not work as expected. It did help some vendors increase their yields and modify farming methods but overall we spent money on education for farmers that did not return the following season, who quit farming for a change in occupation, etc. What we discovered after all the advertising and education is that more money needs to be put towards educating the public.

Future Work:

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.

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?

We will continue to work with community organizations to plan events such as the Art & Wine Festival. Having the farmers' market participate in the Art & Wine Festival added another dimension and activity for both customers/visitors and the art vendors.

Our new focus will be on educating the consumer to make healthier decisions in their food purchases and consumption. One suggestion is to start a book club with a focus on books about the food industry, health, food safety, and eating for health.

We will also continue to conduct surveys of our customers and of our vendors.

We have attracted new board members that will bring fresh ideas to the farmers' market. We will also join Go Texan which will bring increased advertising and benefits.

Because of our success over the past two years and increase in customers to the market and increase in customers to the downtown merchants, the City of Winnsboro provided a budget for the farmers' market for the 2017 season. This was largely due to increase tourist dollars spent in Winnsboro. The majority of customers surveyed said they were planning on shopping with downtown merchants after they visited the farmers' market.