

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

Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	September 30, 2014 – September 29, 2016
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Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Central Iowa Farmers Market Expansion Program
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Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Des Moines, IA
Total Awarded Budget:	\$87,458

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.**

Iowa is a land of plenty. It has at least 11,000 different soils that make up some of the richest, most productive land in the world. It ranks first in the nation in corn and soybean production (2.1 billion bushels of corn and 525 million bushels of soybeans per year). The state's population is relatively small, at 3.09 million. Looking at these statistics, one would assume that Iowa's residents have easy access to plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables.

In 2011, only 13.5% of Iowans reported eating five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day, down from 19.5% in 2005. The median for the nation is 16.6%. Only four states have a lower percent of the population eating five or more servings of fruits or vegetables a day than Iowa.

In addition, Iowans make up one of the most obese/overweight states in the United States. Iowa is the 12th most obese state in the nation with a 30.4% rate of obesity and 65.4% rate of people who are overweight or obese. (Levi, Jeffrey, Segal, et al, 8-9)¹

Research shows that as access to locally-grown food increases, food security improves, more fruits and vegetables are consumed and diet-related chronic diseases decline. Iowans spend more than \$8 billion in food each year, of which 90% is imported into Iowa.²

The Central Iowa Farmers Market Expansion Program is a partnership between United Way of Central Iowa, Eat Greater Des Moines, the Iowa Department of Human Services, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University, farmers market managers, and farmers/producers. The goals of the project are to improve awareness of farmers markets in Des Moines' limited access neighborhoods; to provide training, outreach, and technical assistance to area producers; to increase the number of vendors at farmers markets accepting EBT; to create a marketing plan; to increase the number of people shopping at farmers markets (both customers who receive public benefits and the general population); and to evaluate effectiveness of the central Iowa farmers market expansion program.

Goal/Objective 1: To improve awareness of farmers markets in Des Moines' Limited Access Neighborhoods.

Progress Made: Initially, the project focused on developing relationships with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT), Women Infants and Children (WIC), and Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) directors at the Iowa Department of Human Services and the Department of Agriculture. We then contracted with a marketing firm to lead visioning meetings with Central Iowa farmers market

¹ Levi, Jeffrey, Segal, Thomas, St. Laurent, Lang, and Rayburn. "F as in Fat: How Obesity Threatens America's Future." Trust for America's Health & Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 1 Aug. 2013. Web. 11 June 2014. <<http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/reports/2013/rwjf407528>>.

² "Find a Local Food Bank." *Feeding America*. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 June 2014. <<http://feedingamerica.org/foodbank-results.aspx?state=IA>>.

managers. Those discussions helped identify the farmers market needs and how this project could help with promotion and awareness of the markets.

The *Fresh Food. Friendly Neighbors* marketing campaign was developed and launched in June 2015. A variety of materials were developed to promote individual farmers markets and the region as a whole. Sample materials are provided in the attachment. Eat Greater Des Moines also developed and distributed a weekly farmers market newsletter during the market season. The newsletter was sent to over 800 individuals each week. Each issue spotlighted one regional market and shared what local items were in season.

Impact on Community: Expanded promotion of farmers markets was coordinated throughout the Greater Des Moines metro. This allowed small farmers markets to gain access to free, marketing materials. One farmers market, Valley Junction, used the materials extensively for the 2015 and 2016 seasons. To measure whether using these materials improved that market's performance, we compared how farmers rated Valley Junction's performance with other markets in the region using six statements measuring farmers' beliefs about the markets where they sell. Our results show farmers rated Valley Junction's performance higher than average on most measures when compared to other farmers markets in the region. Of note, Valley Junction scored much higher than average on the statement that customer attendance was higher in 2015 than in 2014. This may be partially due to using the *Fresh Food, Friendly Neighbors* marketing materials.

Goal/Objective 2: To Provide training, outreach, and technical assistance to area producers.

Progress Made: Contractor, Eat Greater Des Moines, developed and coordinated two in-person group trainings for farmers interested in accepting SNAP/EBT benefits at the market. We secured private funding from our largest health system – Unity Point Health – to provide stipends to farmers who attended the trainings. The Iowa Wireless EBT program state director also attended the trainings and was pleased with the outcome. After hearing from attendees how much they appreciated the group training, the DHS representative decided to coordinate her first group sign up day. United Way of Central Iowa (UWCI) and Eat Greater Des Moines helped promote and coordinate the event. UWCI hosted the training. This was the first time a group training was held for farmers across the state. Eat Greater Des Moines has already shared the training materials with other local food coordinators throughout the state so they can replicate the training in their area. The WIC director holds regular webinar trainings for vendors interested in accepting the WIC voucher (FMNP and SFMNP) programs. We worked with the director to promote reimbursement for any farmers who attended those trainings.

In addition to the trainings, Eat Greater Des Moines staff visited 14 of the 22 farmers markets throughout the season. While at the market, they connected with the market manager and vendors to inquire about involvement in the SNAP EBT, WIC FMNP, and the SFMNP. Staff shared information about both programs and the reimbursement available through the project.

Impact on Community: After the trainings, we now have 22 more vendors accepting SNAP benefits at their farmers markets in our community. This is a 59 percent increase over the number of farmers who accepted SNAP benefits and participated in at least one market in the four county area in 2015.

Goal/Objective 3: To Increase the number of vendors at farmers markets accepting food assistance, including SNAP EBT, FMNP, and SFMNP.

Progress Made: Based on feedback from farmers, we organized a training that walked farmers through all elements of the state Iowa Wireless EBT Program application process, three separate applications.

Farmers attending the training were guided through 2 online applications and 1 paper application. Upon completion of the training, they were prepared to mail final application materials.

The pilot training was promoted, along with the *Fresh Food. Friendly Neighbors* farmers market promotional campaign at two conferences focused on farmers. Eat Greater Des Moines attended the Practical Farmers of Iowa Conference and Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference to promote the campaign and pilot SNAP/EBT training. After the pilot training, EGDM coordinated and hosted a second training. The training was promoted to the area farmers market managers with the market manager for the Des Moines Downtown Farmers Market promoting at vendor onboarding meetings.

The FMNP/SFMNP program has a robust training program and schedule. We provide promotional support for these training programs.

Impact on Community: The number of farmers accepting FMNP/SFMNP and selling at markets in the four counties held steady from 2014 to 2015, at 102. The number who accept SNAP declined slightly from 40 farmers in 2014 to 37 in 2015. Following the 2016 SNAP training sponsored by the Central Iowa Farmer Market Expansion Project, 22 new farmers applied to accept SNAP, which will tentatively bring the total up to 59 farmers accepting SNAP at markets in the four counties (assuming the 37 who accepted SNAP in 2015 continue to do so in 2016).

We were able to leverage our FMPP grant funding to secure additional funds to support financial incentives for farmers attending SNAP and/or FMNP/SFMNP training. These funds were also available to support expanding the online presence of the campaign.

Goal/Objective 4: To create a marketing plan for Central Iowa Farmers Market Expansion Program

Progress Made: A robust marketing plan was completed by contractor, Lexicon Marketing, in June 2015. All elements developed were shared with market managers within the region and uploaded to an open online database. Samples of all elements were mailed to market managers at the beginning of the season with the invitation to order more free of charge. For the 2016 season a new handout targeted at consumers was developed and distributed widely. The following items were developed:

- 8.5x11 Flyer
- 12x18 Poster
- Print ad
- Door stuffer
- 5x7 Postcard listing all regional markets
- 12x18 EBT Poster
- EBT Recruitment Packet
- Enhance Your Stand Tip Sheet for vendors
- Social Media Guide

Impact on Community: Utilization of the free, professionally developed *Fresh Food. Friendly Neighbors* (FFFN) marketing materials increased each year. Five markets utilized the materials and printing support in the 2015 season. Eight utilized in the 2016 season. One market manager said the materials had a direct impact on customer attendance at the market she managed. They started a new market in 2016 and on each market day they posted FFFN fliers and signs with their market information around town where people tend to gather, such as coffee shops, doctors' offices, etc., and picked the fliers back up at the end of the day. They also posted FFFN signs on sandwich boards near the market location. On the

days when they distributed FFFN fliers market attendance was between 80 and 100 customers. They asked customers how they heard of the market, and the vast majority said they saw the FFFN signs. Later the city asked them to discontinue posting signs, after which attendance dropped to five customers. She described the materials in this way, *"The market materials did work very well. They were great. They caught your eye."*

Markets were not the only ones who appreciated the marketing materials. The regional farmers market listing was appreciated by various groups working with the community. Many remarked they did not realize there were so many area markets throughout the summer! Increasing awareness of all area markets benefits markets, vendors and the community.

Goal/Objective 5: To Increase the number of people shopping at farmers markets (both customers who receive public benefits and the general population).

Progress Made: Through community presentations and the development of new promotional materials, we continue to raise awareness of food assistance programs accepted at local farmers markets. Farmers market promotional materials are available to and shared with local social service agencies to share with clients. Eat Greater Des Moines regularly promoted various markets through their social media outlets, and staff presented to 21 different groups promoting the Fresh Food Friendly Neighbors campaign. Attendance counts were conducted at our target market, Lutheran Services in Iowa.

Impact on Community: Through a survey we conducted with farmers market managers, over half agreed or strongly agreed that:

- Community members know what time and day of the week the market is held (67 percent agreed or strongly agreed).
- Community members are aware that they can use SNAP and WIC, FMNP, and SFMNP coupons to shop at farmers markets (67 percent).
- Our market met customer attendance goals in 2015 (60 percent).

Goal/Objective 6: To Evaluate Effectiveness of the Central Iowa Farmers Market Expansion Program.

Progress Made: Contractor, Iowa State University (ISU), developed and implemented program evaluation. During the winter of 2015/16 we conducted two surveys, one with farmers market managers and the other with farmers participating in farmers market in the four county region. In addition to evaluation materials developed by ISU, we also obtained data from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and the Iowa Department of Human Services on the number of farmers selling in the region who accepted EBT and FMNP/Senior FMNP and the aggregate value of their sales in 2015.

Impact on Community: Extensive data was collected on customer, vendor, and market manager experiences throughout the grant period. Specific outcomes from the data are shared in #2 and #7 below. Data collection included:

- Visitor counts
- Number of producers who accept SNAP EBT, FMNP, and Senior FMNP in markets in our four county target area
- Farmer survey
- Farmers market manager survey
- Qualitative interviews with key stakeholders

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.

- i. Attendance: Attendance at the LSI Farmers Market increased 30% from 2015 to 2016
- ii. Number of direct jobs created: 0
- iii. Number of jobs retained: 98 (12 at farmers markets; 86 on farm)
- iv. Number of indirect jobs created: 1 on farm in 2015 (but a loss of 2 on-farm jobs in 2016)
- v. Number of markets expanded: 1 (Valley Junction)
- vi. Number of new markets established: 2 (Capital Complex Market and Drake Neighborhood market)
- vii. 55% of farmers indicated their farmers market sales increased from the previous season to the season when they took the survey but did not share the value of those sales.
- viii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 91 (69 selling at the 8 markets using the FFFN materials and 22 taking EBT training)

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?

The *Fresh Food. Friendly Neighbors* campaign expanded the customer base for area farmers markets by engaging additional low income/low access populations. 86% of market managers agreed or strongly agreed that a diverse range of individuals (across income, race, and ethnicity) utilized their farmers market. Highlighting markets with vendors accepting food assistance programs and distributing promotional materials to a variety of groups working with diverse populations supported this effort. Distribution partners include medical clinics, WIC clinics, public health departments, and non-profits providing direct service like food pantries and meal sites.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

- i. **Who are your community partners?** Our community partners include the Department of Human Services, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, area farmers market managers, healthcare providers and non-profit human service agencies. We have a variety of public, private, and not-for-profit partnerships.
- ii. **How have they contributed to the overall results of the FMPP project?** Community partnerships allowed us to expand our reach. UnityPoint Health – Des Moines, a healthcare system with three areas hospitals and dozens of clinics, has given financial support, which allowed us to provide farmer reimbursement for attending SNAP EBT and FMNP/SFMNP trainings. Our partnership with local social service agencies (including county health departments, Des Moines Area Religious Council food pantries, and Visiting Nurse Services) allows us to get market promotional materials to their clients, including food assistance clientele.
- iii. **How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMPP grant?** We will continue to utilize the marketing and promotional materials developed through the project. We plan to continue to update, print and distribute materials promoting the food assistance programs and area farmers markets. We will work with our partners to distribute materials. We also plan to hold another farmer group training session for farmers market vendors interested in accepting SNAP/EBT at their market booth or farm stand. This training proved to be valuable for farmers and DHS.

5. **Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the FMPP project?** Yes, three contractors have been used during the project. Lexicon Marketing provided marketing support. Eat Greater Des Moines provides program coordination and implementation. Iowa State University Extension and Outreach is providing program evaluation.

6. **Have you publicized any results yet?** No.

i. **If yes, how did you publicize the results?** Not applicable.

ii. **To whom did you publicize the results?** Not applicable.

iii. **How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach?**

***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?** Yes

i. **If so, how did you collect the information?**

Several methods were used to evaluate the program, including:

- An annual survey of farmers market managers.
- An annual survey of farmers market vendors
- End of project interviews with key project partners.
- Annually tracking how many farmers accepted SNAP/EBT and FMNP in the four counties, and tracking the value of their sales.
- Taking attendance counts at the Lutheran Services of Iowa farmers market.
 - a. Total estimated attendance = (Total entrance count * total minutes market lasts) / (total minutes of entrance count * average number of entrances by visitors)

ii. **What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?**

1. Ratings of farmers market performance show improvements from 2014 to 2016.

Farmers market performance ratings from 2015 and 2016 surveys from managers and farmers compared the markets that used the *Fresh Food, Friendly Neighbors* (FFFN) marketing materials with those that did not. These are the marketing materials developed through the project.

Farmers selling at markets using the FFFN marketing campaign materials consistently scored the statements higher than did farmers selling at markets not using the campaign. The statement: "The market is adequately advertised or marketed," received the highest score. One interviewee mentioned how grateful they were for the FFFN campaign: "*The imagery was much better than the one we had, and we used it everywhere: Facebook posts, posters, postcards... we did as much as we could with it. There are 40 markets within a 30-mile radius of ours, so this helped brand the market. I'm not sure if people pay attention to all the farmers markets, so this helped raise awareness.*"

Another interviewee said FFFN materials had a direct impact on customer attendance at the market she managed. They started a new market in 2016 and on each market day they posted FFFN fliers and signs with their market information around town where people tend to gather, such as coffee shops, doctors' offices, etc., and picked the fliers back up at the end of the day. They also posted FFFN signs on sandwich boards near the market location. On the days when they distributed FFFN fliers, market attendance was between 80 and 100 customers. They asked customers how they heard of the market, and the vast majority said they saw the FFFN signs. Later the city asked them to discontinue posting

signs, after which attendance dropped to five customers. She described the materials in this way, *“The market materials did work very well. They were great. They caught your eye.”*

Further results showed that farmers market managers believe their markets are becoming more welcoming places for low income people. That said, improvements can still be made to help EBT and FMNP users feel more comfortable at farmers markets. One interviewee said that *“as a consumer it can be overwhelming to find specific products, let alone ones who accept EBT. [...] Just helping consumers who want to use their EBT at farmers market is important”*. This shows even if community members know when and where their farmers market is located, they may not know which vendors accept EBT and could feel overwhelmed by which products they can acquire.

2. The Lutheran Service of Iowa farmers market experienced increased customer attendance. The Lutheran Services of Iowa (LSI) farmers market is unique in that its vendors are all former refugees who are participating in LSI’s Global Green farmer incubator program. These farmers are socially disadvantaged in several ways: beginning, low-resource, and minority. They are also learning to farm under very different conditions both in the natural and market environments.

Our data suggests that market attendance increased from 2015 to 2016. While the estimated attendance in August at the market fell slightly from 2015 to 2016, the attendance in June nearly doubled. If these counts are representative of the whole market season, we estimate that attendance increased by approximately 30 percent from 2015 to 2016.

3. More farmers accept Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) vouchers than Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and FMNP sales are higher than SNAP sales. The number of farmers who accept SNAP in the program area increased over the course of the project.

The number of Central Iowa local food farmers who accept FMNP/Senior FMNP \$3 coupons decreased slightly over the life of this project (from 102 farmers in 2014 and 2015 to 96 in 2016), whereas the number who accept SNAP/EBT as payment increased (from 40 in 2014 to 46 in 2016). The increase in vendors accepting SNAP in 2016 may be at least partially credited to the SNAP training coordinated by Eat Greater Des Moines and United Way in spring 2016 as a part of this project.

Related to that, three of the four interviewees shared that the training organized by Eat Greater Des Moines, United Way and DHS to help farmers register to receive EBT payments were extremely helpful for farmers. *“We were very successful in getting some more machines to vendors,”* said one interviewee. The process of applying to receive an EBT reader *“can be overwhelming and too complicated. [The project coordinators] helped streamline the paperwork and application process to make it not feel so overwhelming so it can be worthwhile to deal with the paperwork. As an entrepreneur, you have a lot of things going on, you have to prioritize: for a program you’ve never participated in, it’s easy to let that slide.”* This highlights the importance of helping farmers navigate the application process to accept EBT payments at farmers markets.

4. Farmers market partners indicated making new connections and strengthening relationships. Strong social networks among farmers market managers can help their markets succeed by exposing them to resources and ideas that they might not otherwise be aware of. It can also create a sense of comradery and support that can help them remain motivated in their work. Conversely, farmers markets operating in close geographic locations can just as easily see one another as competitors as

collaborators. Hence, having a strong social network among farmers market managers can help them to find ways in which they can cooperate, rather than compete, benefitting all markets.

Forty-six percent of responding farmers market managers did say they met another manager during the grant period (2014 to 2016), with a total of 42 new meetings occurring. While some market managers indicated nothing happened as a result of meeting other farmers market managers for the first time, a few did share results, including:

- Helping get two new markets started, with an experienced manager acting as a sounding board for the two new ones.
- A new market manager learned what kinds of permits, if any, their market needed to get by asking an experienced manager.
- One market manager referred another to an insurance company that offered liability plans appropriate for farmers markets.

One interviewee said that one of the major successes of participating in this project was learning from and developing new and or stronger relationships with the project partners. *"I certainly learned more about Eat Greater Des Moines [and] United Way. I learned about some of the strategies they are using to increase the number of vendors at farmers markets [...] I learned more about what the DHS goes through to set EBT machines up. [...] We were successful in getting some more machines to vendors. And of course, we have a better, new and important relationship with Eat Greater Des Moines."*

5. Surveyed farmers say they have attended trainings in various fields and would like to receive additional training. Our survey showed that while responding farmers have attended several types of training, they would largely like to receive additional training. Over half of responding farmers have received training in direct marketing (57 percent) and production (52 percent), yet would like additional training: 41 percent expressed interest in further training on direct marketing and 55 percent in production. Accepting food assistance programs is the area in which the fewest farmers said they had had training (33 percent), but nearly half would like training in this area.

The interviews with project partners offer more insight regarding farmers' need for training to accept SNAP/EBT and FMNP and why it was helpful to have a face-to-face meeting, organized by Eat Greater Des Moines and United Way. First, by reaching out individually to vendors, farmers market managers were able to encourage vendors to attend trainings to accept food assistance programs: *"Little by little I have lots of communication with our vendors and just encourage them to sign up. I encouraged our vendors who weren't participating to give it a try. I promised that if they went to the meeting they would be signed up before they left. A lot had to drive an hour or two, so it's a commitment, but knowing there would be someone to walk them through it, the confusion went away. It was successful; many of the vendors who participated came back later and said there was no way they could've done the paperwork on their own [...] All of them came back and said, 'Wow, you were right.' It was a really great way to get them signed up."*

One farmers market manager explained that in the planning meetings for next season, they *"would have some vendors who have participated give feedback to our newer farmers to let them know that it's worthwhile, and share some of their experiences."*

A project partner interviewed mentioned the following challenge: *"It seems that there are only so many vendors out there. It's a challenge to find new vendors [to accept food assistance as payment]; maybe we are at a saturation point."* This shows that to increase acceptance rates at farmers markets, the best

use of limited resources might be easier to encourage current vendors to accept nutritional program payments than recruit new vendors and train them.

6. Most farmers increased their sales at farmers markets, attributing this growth to increased production and changes in the farmers markets' attendance and marketing strategies. Farmers were asked how their farmers market sales changed in comparison with the previous season (if applicable). Over half (23 of 42) of responding farmers indicated their sales had increased, and approximately one in four (26 percent) indicated their sales remained about the same. This data suggests that for the majority of farmers, Central Iowa farmers markets are becoming more viable.

A closer look at the data shows that three of the eight farmers who indicated their farmers market used different marketing strategies, sold at markets using the Fresh Food Friendly Neighbors marketing materials.

7. Successes and challenges experienced by farmers markets managers are common. Farmers market managers shared both their success and challenges through open-ended questions. Many of the same factors were mentioned both as successes and challenges, such as the number of customers and consistency of their attendance, the number and diversity of vendors, location and weather. One farmers market manager interviewed emphasized that *"the success of the market is very weather dependent. If it's 95 degrees outside people probably won't come."* This demonstrates that these are key factors contributing to a market's success or failure.

Three respondents mentioned food assistance programs as a success or challenge, with two saying the level of SNAP and FMNP use was a success and another mentioning a problem with the market's EBT machine as a challenge.

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:**
- ii. **Did the project generate any income? No**
 - a. **If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award?**

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).**
 - ii. **If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:**
 - 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:**
- The process to become eligible to accept SNAP is cumbersome for farmers. With the Iowa Wireless EBT project, farmers are required to go through the online SNAP registration process on their own. The first step is to register as a grocery store, not a farmers market which seems counterintuitive to many farmers. The training provided by Eat Greater Des Moines was greatly appreciated. While the registration is mostly done online, farmers appreciated having someone to ask questions and walk

through the process with them. Our partner at DHS was surprised at how appreciative farmers were to have the group training. It led her to partner with United Way and Eat Greater Des Moines to host her first group training that was highly successful.

- Accessing vendors was challenging. Working with the market manager to pass along communication was vital but was not always enough, especially considering a majority of market managers are volunteers. Developing relationships is vital to engaging vendors and market managers in the program.
- The development of the new marketing piece that outlined the markets but also explained both SNAP and the Farmers Market Nutrition Program was valuable for our healthcare partners. We took for granted those who are eligible for both programs knew program details. The marketing piece developed in year two outlined both programs and was something that could be shared broadly by our healthcare partners.
- Allowing our marketing materials to be adjusted for those markets not accepting either benefit program allowed more markets to utilize the materials. Many markets in our region have no farmers who accept the benefits, making the originally developed marketing materials promoting SNAP and FMNP useless.

10. 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.

- i. 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 *Fresh Food. Friendly Neighbors* campaign will continue for the 2018 season and beyond. Over the course of the grant cycle, we have worked to build a strong program promoting local farmers markets and building the accessibility of the markets for consumers of all income levels. This work will continue to grow and expand. Group training to engage more vendors accepting SNAP is scheduled for 2018. Training materials have also been shared with other groups interested in replicating the training in their region. We hope sharing these materials and experience will dramatically increase the accessibility of Iowa farmers markets by increasing the number of vendors accepting SNAP and other food assistance programs.