

**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](mailto: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.

<b>Report Date Range:</b> <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	October 1, 2014- September 30, 2016
<b>Authorized Representative Name:</b>	Dan LoBianco
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<b>Authorized Representative Email:</b>	dan@dubuquemainstreet.org
<b>Recipient Organization Name:</b>	Dubuque Main Street
<b>Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:</b>	<i>Dubuque Farmers' Market-Expanding Services &amp; Electronic Transaction Upgrades</i>
<b>Grant Agreement Number:</b> <i>(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	<b>14-FMPPX-0057</b>
<b>Year Grant was Awarded:</b>	2015
<b>Project City/State:</b>	Dubuque, IA
<b>Total Awarded Budget:</b>	\$77,188

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.

**Goal/Objective 1:** Create a foundation of customer service for new and returning consumers by: (a) increasing waste reduction and setup infrastructure for a centralized information center that will also house the electronic transaction exchange station.

*Progress Made:* Tasks we completed to achieve our goal started with the purchase of waste receptacles; recycling, garbage, and compost. These receptacles would be positioned near our safety barricades, which is where the highest flow of traffic is. Included in our first goal was to create a centralized center to also house the transaction exchange station. This information tent soon became the “Market Money” location, housing not only the transaction terminals, but also a location to retrieve a market map, be informed of programs at market, and to ask questions of the newly hired booth personnel. Due to the nature of our market being ever expanding, and our newly hired On-Site Market Manager having a limited timeframe in the morning, we purchased a John Deere Gator for their efficiency setting up market.

*Impact on Community:* Our market's ease of cleanliness and promotion of sustainability was not a main attraction, however, this grant provided a more sustainable experience for our market goers. Within this goal, we were able to expand our program reach within the SNAP beneficiary population by attracting a Double Up Food Bucks incentive program. This goal of the project was to increase sales for vendors by establishing more opportunities for consumers to spend money through the establishment of a token system for Credit/Debit and EBT. Providing an electronic transaction exchange station at market, we technologically advanced our market and the inclusion of EBT exchange created an opportunity for those with economic hardships to participate in the regional economy in a directly beneficial way for both themselves and the vendors. The location of the Farmers' Market is in a priority area. Many of the residents of the area have limited access to vehicles. Their nearest supermarket is a half mile away or more. The Farmers' Market offers products that meet basic food needs within EBT users' own neighborhood.

Through our increase in sanitary and setup accommodations, improved marketing, and the establishment of a centralized source of information, we also promoted a nurturing environment for all consumers, especially for newcomers to the Market, so that they felt welcomed, engaged, and encouraged to return. By establishing a centralized transfer station, consumers had an efficient and stream-lined process for transacting SNAP benefits into tokens for fresh fruit and vegetables at market. We provided a centralized entity which answered questions for customers as well as offer guidance. We have found that there is no such thing as ‘too many’ educational opportunities to tell the important story of safe, local, sustainable foods. Consumers who have had an opportunity for input will feel engaged and more inclined to return.

**Goal/Objective 2:** Increase the number of vendors that accept electronic transactions and provide off-season training.

*Progress Made:* Training was held in March 2015 & 2016 for all vendors to attend. At the training sessions, our new market systems and promotions were shared with the vendors who attend market. The vendors were allowed to express questions or concerns about the new market programs.

*Impact on Community:* Vendors accepting the token system (developed within our first goal) increased from none to 56 vendors. From 2015 to 2016, we increased from 56 to 67 vendors accepting. Our training program could have been more successful for 2016, however due to transitions of office staff, our training was not as emphasized as it had been from 2014 to 2015. Our goal was to achieve 650 EBT transactions per market season, averaging 25 transactions per market day. Goal Two focused on expanding our potential to bring in EBT sales required our establishment of outreach and training to vendors to become registered to accept EBT payments.

One component of vendor training involved developing understanding and awareness of the hardships many in Dubuque face. Increasing vendor's abilities to accept tokens required training to accept SNAP and Credit/ Debit tokens. Dubuque Farmers' Market is located in an urban revitalization district. Majority of the neighbors with the Market locale are low income residents, with little more than a convenience store within over a half a mile from their homes. Vendors expanded their reach to a new consumer market in exchange for a relatively small time investment in training. Our goal in 2015 was to increase to 22% vendor participation in the money market program. In 2016, we hoped to achieve more than 30% of vendors participating.

**Goal/Objective 3:** Implement a marketing campaign for consumers targeting low-income low-access residents.

*Progress Made:* By placing transit signage on the local city busses which travel through low-income areas, putting up billboards in our key target demographic areas, and by providing materials at the Market Money booth, we looked to target residents who previously had a hurdle. We also completed radio advertising and website re-design to reach out to all community members. The most effective marketing strategies for engaging our low-income and low-access residents were through our billboards and engaging in conversation with them at the Market Money booth.

*Impact on Community:* During the implementation of our marketing, we did not consider the flux of advertising cost based on the 2016 election cycle. We feel utilizing radio and billboards for advertising reached more of our population than other methods used. We worked with a local marketing service to create a successful Dubuque Farmers website. Features added include an interactive map and "search by product" capabilities.

By improving the efficacy of our marketing strategies, we increased public awareness, particularly within the low-income and low-access population. The Dubuque Farmers' Market had unintentionally restricted access for community members receiving federal nutrition assistance, limiting the overall success of the market. Informing the public of our easy token redemption was pivotal to our success and will aid in further enrollment of unsubscribed vendors in the program.

Our goal was to create a staffed information booth and to provide understanding of the program. Training among vendors will also promote awareness of the program, and provide market success.

2. Quantify the overall impact of the project on the intended beneficiaries, if applicable, from the baseline date. Include further explanation if necessary.

- i. Number of direct jobs created: 2 (Part Time On-Site Market Manager & Part Time Booth Manager)
- ii. Number of jobs retained: 2
- iii. Sales increase:
  - a. 2014 to 2015- The growth from 5 vendors ,whom independently accepted SNAP in 2014, to 56 vendors in 2015 allowed \$4,600 in SNAP dollars alone to flow through the market. Credit and Debit token sales went from \$0 in 2014 to \$13,335 in 2015.
  - b. 2015 to 2016- Nearly \$6,700 more tokens were redeemed through the Market Booth. In 2016, Credit and Debit token sales increased to \$17,505. In a 2016 vendor survey given through Dubuque Main Street in regards to the 2016 Farmers' Market Season, vendors reported a moderate to significant increases between the two seasons.

*Beneficiaries:* The market area is located in a mixed income area. By including a program for SNAP recipients to use card monies at market with more than a handful of vendors, we looked to bridge the income inequality gap. Uniting the vendors together to provide a universal system of payment, we were able to create a sustainable token program. After educating the vendors and the customers at

market of the system and market booth location, we were able to increase the amount of card transactions per week.

Note: Vendors received a formal training session for the new centralized station. In this training for 2015 & 2016, over 70% of vendors attended. The remaining 30% received follow-up training of the system and market updates via email and mail.

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?

- i. We see the Dubuque Community feeling proud and safe at our Farmers' Market, allowing them to bring their families with them and make Saturday morning a family event. The community is becoming more aware of our Market Money and SNAP services through various forms of advertising.

Methods of advertising included:

- c. Participated in radio advertisements running every Thursday, Friday and Saturday during market
  - d. Maintained a 30' tall banner on vacant building near market in addition to establishing billboards promoting the Market Money program at Dubuque Farmers' Market
  - e. Maintained vehicle wrap for public transportation
  - f. Created a newsletter, a monthly publication to Market Goers
  - g. News Release held on Double Up Food Bucks program brought federal USDA personnel and Iowa Healthiest State personnel to our market
  - h. Partnered with local community building organizations to promote Farmers' market
- ii. We see people from the low income population discovering the farmers' market. SNAP transaction sales 2015-2016 alone increased by 188%. With the SNAP program in place, Dubuque Farmers' Market was chosen to participate in Double Up Food Bucks, additionally allowing \$4,100 to flow into market for the benefit of vendors offering fresh fruits and vegetables. We secured 56 vendors accepting SNAP in 2015, up from 5 in 2014. In 2015, 884 terminal transactions occurred, 25% were SNAP. This was 15% higher than our original goal.
  - iii. Our vendors feel assured of the Market Money/SNAP program and have experienced the benefits from being a Market Money vendor. We increased to 67 vendors of 160 total (includes occasional vendors) accepting Market Money after a training session held in March 2016.
  - iv. Dubuque residents now understand the Market Money/SNAP program. With the assistance of the vendors and the Market Booth Manager, customers were educated in the Market Money program.
  - v. We are beginning to see more people use their SNAP cards. In 2014, we had 5 independent vendors accepting SNAP at their booth. Upon creation of the Market Money program in 2015, 56 vendors started to accept SNAP at their booth. From 2015 to 2016, our SNAP transactions increased by 266%, equating to more than 335 more transactions throughout market for SNAP alone. Transaction averages per day in 2015 for SNAP card users were \$756.83. In 2016, the average SNAP transactions increased to \$1,186.67. Per SNAP in 2015, users were requesting around \$19 of tokens. In 2016, SNAP recipients took an average of \$13. SNAP recipients in 2016

were eligible for our Double Up Food Bucks program, a \$1:\$1 match up to \$10 (funded by separate charitable entities). On average SNAP recipients in 2016 were provided \$21 to spend per market day. The 2016 season saw an increase of \$6,600 of SNAP and DUFB tokens flowing through the market as compared to the 2015 season.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

- i. Iowa State University Extension Office of Dubuque County: Partner in reducing health disparities within the Dubuque community.
- ii. Mercy Hospital Wellness: Partnering to attract healthy chef demonstrations at market and providing funding in order to reduce health disparities in Dubuque.
- iii. 365 Ink (web page): Promotions of the Dubuque Farmers' Market and creating a web design with DMS staff.
- iv. Radio Dubuque: Promotions of Dubuque Farmers' Market on local radio stations and live radio remotes.
- v. TH Media: Press releases regarding market activities.
- vi. Dubuque Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque: Provided the seed funding for SNAP recipients attending market for the Double Up Food Bucks program. Included Market Money promotions with other low-income oriented non-profits.
- vii. Chuck Isenhart, State Representative: State Representative, Iowa District 100, working with Dubuque Farmers' Market to secure state level sponsorship of increasing SNAP recipient attendance at markets.
- viii. AmeriCorps: Provided personnel to assist in targeting low-income families to come to market and establishing a Kids at Market Program.
- ix. Circles Initiative: Holds regular meetings for low income Dubuquers and included the Dubuque Farmers' Market to promote the SNAP/ Market Money program.
- x. American Trust and Savings Bank: Purchasing terminals for card transactions through a local bank allowed a Friends at Market program to be created for marketing and engagement at market.
- xi. Iowa's Healthiest State: Partner to promote SNAP recipients to attend market by including Dubuque in the Double Up Food Bucks pilot program and sending direct mailers to SNAP recipients in Dubuque.
- xii. Through Iowa's Healthiest State, the Double Up Food Bucks incentive program was attracted to the Dubuque Farmers' Market in 2016, as one of six pilot programs in Iowa, due to the existence of the Market Money program. With the attraction of promoting fresh fruit and vegetables purchased at market, Double Up Food Bucks provides SNAP recipients with a \$1:\$1 match, up to \$10 per market day. Vendors and customers already familiarized with the token process aided in the complete success of the DUFB program at market

- xiii. World Food Prize: Providing funding to support the local SNAP program promotion through Double Up Food Bucks
- xiv. Angela Tagtow: Attended the promotional release of Double Up Food Bucks at the Dubuque Market and promoted the SNAP recipients to use the Market Money Booth.

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. We are not using contractors.**

6. Have you publicized any results yet?

Due to the nature of the project, successes of market were published upon request of the local media entities. No formal press release of this particular program was released. However, within the community we completed these activities. Our community takes notice of these activities, versus reading or listening to media sources. Coverage of a media conference celebrating 2015 results and announcing 2016 continuing programs was widely covered. Coverage across print, TV & radio was achieved of Dan LoBianco's presentation to the Dubuque City Council about the statistics and success of the programs enabled through this grant.

The enhanced SNAP received a 2016 1<sup>st</sup> Place Dubuque 365 Community Impact Award in March 2015. This resulted in a feature story in this popular bi-weekly tabloid and on social media.

Our increased accessibility for SNAP recipients and increased foot traffic was noticed by Iowa's Healthiest State. Attracting Double Up Food Bucks to the Dubuque Farmers' Market was due to the marketing exposure and the creation of the Market Money system in 2015.

7. Have you collected any feedback from your community and additional stakeholders about your work?

The market area is located in a mixed income area. Inclusive Dubuque reported a poverty rate of 14.8% in 2014, with 20% of children living in poverty for over a year and 10% Dubuque's population in 2016 is receiving food assistance (an increase of 5%) according to DHS statistics. Dubuque's overall obesity rate is 29%, which strongly correlates with the 14.8% living in poverty. Promoting purchasing local and healthy food is the Dubuque Farmers' Market mission. In Dubuque, this relationship is perhaps most evident when looking at the relationship between overweight children and eligibility for free and reduced price lunch. In 2016, the Department of Human Services released data compiled from Fulton, Prescott, Jefferson, Marshall, and Audubon elementary schools, reflecting over 65% of students are income eligible for free or reduced price lunch and 33- 44% of the students are overweight. With the programs developed for Dubuque Farmer's Market, families had the opportunity to purchase healthy meal choices from sustainable food sources, which may contribute to further healthy lifestyle choices in the future.

Since 2014, the participating vendors reported an increase of sales ranging from \$150 to \$250 per week. This correlates with our increase in foot traffic at market and our credit and debit transaction totals. During the 2016 market season, over 400 NEW SNAP recipients attended market. Feedback on how they learned about the market money booth was gathered weekly. In 2015, billboards and radio advertisements were the main channel of information about the market. In 2016, word of mouth and vendor promotion proved to be the foremost means in which new market goers found out about market. We have grown rapidly within our market money program and, as a result, have attracted further programs to market.

Vendors and local businesses were surveyed and all data reported reflected an increase of foot traffic on Saturdays when the Dubuque Farmers' Market is held. In a survey conducted by

Dubuque Main Street in 2015 and 2016, vendors reported sales increasing moderately to significantly during these market seasons.

Low-income customers now have better access to healthier and more wholesome foods. For example, 21 SNAP customers per week shopped at market; this is up from almost no SNAP households at the start of the project in 2014 and an average of 9.5 SNAP sales in 2015.

Year	No. of vendors	No. FMNP Vendors	No. of SNAP Vendors
2014	111	24	5
2015	105	24	56
2016	145	24	67

SNAP sales increased from nearly nothing in 2014 to \$7,120 in 2016. Between 2015 and 2016 we compared our SNAP transactions.

Total \$ EBT Transactions				
	2015	2015 Transaction Count	2016	2016 Transaction Count
May	\$584.87	31	\$430.00	24
June	\$698.00	42	\$739.00	45
July	\$882.29	42	\$1,602.00	139
August	\$1,082.00	47	\$1,340.00	96
Sept.	\$537.00	42	\$2,026.00	160
Oct.	\$815.84	42	\$983.00	78
Total	\$4,600.00	246	\$7,120.00	542
Average	\$756.83	41	\$1,186.67	90
Per User	\$18.70		\$21.41 *Includes DUF B \$	DUF B: 461

Total \$ Transactions:				
	2015	2015 Transaction	2016	2016 Transaction
May	\$3,952.27	179	\$ 2,380.00	90
June	\$2,333.00	114	\$ 3,216.00	165
July	\$2,648.09	146	\$ 6,113.00	272
August	\$3,777.00	180	\$ 3,694.00	197
Sept.	\$2,407.00	135	\$ 5,579.00	266
Oct.	\$2,817.64	175	\$ 3,643.00	172
Total	\$17,935.00	929	\$ 24,625.00	1162

Avg. Per	\$19.31	35	\$	21.19	45
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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:  Completed
- ii. Did the project generate any income? N/A

9. Lessons Learned

With market’s expanded reach, we found the Dubuque Main Street staff focusing more time on market functionality as opposed to the promotion of market. With an office of three fulltime DMS staff and two part time staff dedicated to Farmers’ Market, much time was focused on resolving arising issues. As the market expanded, so did safety concerns. We continuously worked with city officials to promote a safe flow of traffic. Not only did our vendor reach expand, the customer reach expanded. We became a victim of our own success.

In 2015, chef demonstrations occurred in the hopes of educating our customers on how to cook fresh produce purchased at market. Our chefs made low cost per serving meals to aid our low-income customers in bridging the gap between unhealthy choices and healthy choices. Local chefs had a clean and sustainable opportunity to share their skills with market goers. This aided in the success of creating a foundation of customer service for new and returning customers.

Targeting low income families, our Kids at Market program was established in 2016 to partner with our Chefs at Market program. Attractive activities at the Kids at Market booth promoted new recipes with fresh produce and introduced various hands on activities, including a family scavenger hunt at market. Next year, our program will expand to develop partnerships between vendors and local businesses. These partnerships will focus on cultivating events that further engage the youth demographic (i.e. events where children learn healthy recipes, demonstrations on how to pick fresh produce at market). In 2016 alone, throughout our community we engaged over 200 different kids and, on average, 60 kids weekly. Without the building of a consistent customer base and marketing made possible through our USDA grant, we feel our Kids at Market program would not succeed.

Through Iowa’s Healthiest State, the Double Up Food Bucks incentive program was attracted to the Dubuque Farmers’ Market in 2016, as one of six pilot programs in Iowa, due to the existence of the Market Money program. With the attraction of promoting fresh fruit and vegetables purchased at market, Double Up Food Bucks provides SNAP recipients with a \$1:\$1 match, up to \$10 per market day. Vendors and customers already familiarized with the token process aided in the complete success of the DUFB program at market.

If we were to request another USDA grant, we would include in the budget the expenses for radio advertising during the election cycle. The creation of contracts extending one year after the USDA grant’s completion would encourage continuous promotions of market for years to come. In the pursuit of expanding marketing capabilities and promotions in order to establish a customer base, we discovered that one initial push to use billboards and radio advertising promoted our success in the first year. “Bringing a friend” or word of mouth will be the best marketing approach in subsequent years. Make an initial impression and market goers will do the rest of the heavy lifting.

With our Manage My Market program, we were able to accept or deny vendors with ease. However, because of staff rotating, vendor placement with our expanding market became difficult.

Much time was spent measuring stall spaces and moving vendors, as certain new areas became difficult to manage with the higher foot and vehicle traffic.

#### 10. Future Work

Due to the funding provided under the FMPP:

- i. EBT sales increased from nothing to \$4,600 between 2014 and 2015 and a little over 1.5 times more between 2015 and 2016.
- ii. Overall, token flow at market increased by \$6,600 between 2015 and 2016, an average of over \$254 per week flowing to local vendors.
- iii. All vendors and downtown local businesses estimate that the population attending market grew by 30% between 2014 and 2015. Between 2015 and 2016, the vendors and local business owners also expressed around a 30% consumer growth. Record numbers were hit in 2016 prior to the busy market season.
- iv. Our capabilities to accept market vendors has taken much weight off the market staff and we are able to continue to expand our community reach and vendor reach as a result of this advance.

Because of our success in 2016 with the program, our Double Up Food Bucks Program mentioned will be able to sustain into the next year's market. Integrating with our previously established resources, we look to provide resources for the SNAP members in our community including:

- a. Market Specific Recipes
- b. A Chef's Demonstration
  - a. Including how to pick fresh at market
  - b. How to prepare foods purchased at market
  - c. How to plan ahead for a market day
- c. Kids at Market Activities
  - a. Providing sustainable ideas to the youth and families attending market
  - b. Providing new ways to view and consume fresh produce