

**Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP)
Final Performance Report**

The final performance report summarizes the outcome of your LFPP award objectives. As stated in the LFPP Terms and Conditions, you will not be eligible for future LFPP or Farmers Market 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 LFPP 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 your assigned grant specialist to avoid delays:

LFPP Phone: 202-720-2731; Email: USDALFPPQuestions@ams.usda.gov; Fax: 202-720-0300

Should you need to mail your documents via hard copy, contact LFPP staff to obtain mailing instructions.

Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	FINAL REPORT: September 30, 2014 – September 30, 2016
Authorized Representative Name:	Alexandra Curatolo
Authorized Representative Phone:	312.307.7305
Authorized Representative Email:	info@bellischicago.com
Recipient Organization Name:	Belli's Chicago
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Belli's Local Foods Market Expansion Project"
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-LFPPX-IL-0059
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Chicago/IL
Total Awarded Budget:	\$30,829

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LFPP staff may contact you to follow up for long-term success stories. Who may we contact?
XX 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 LFPP 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: Increase capacity for production and distribution of bottled juices that feature locally grown produce.

Progress Made: The Goodnature X-1 Commercial Juicer was purchased in October 2014 & arrived in November 2014. Before this equipment purchase, our juice bar was operating with a small Norwalk juice press with a capacity of less than half that of what our Goodnature juice press currently produces. We were able to successfully make larger quantities of cold pressed juice within a very small amount of time utilizing many of the ‘seconds’ and ‘juiceables’ as determined by local farmers as well as featuring organic & local produce offered seasonally. This also allowed for more distribution of bottled juices since we can now fulfill larger orders as compared to prior to the equipment purchase. The Goodnature X-1 is currently being used under a variance issued by the City of Chicago. I have met with the Public Health Department and unfortunately, Illinois state laws limit the distribution of our product outside our storefront.

Impact on Community: The option to purchase a bottled juice and consume Belli’s fruit & vegetable juices has positively impacted the community in offering a wider selection of beverage choices and healthy alternatives. The majority of our customers live in the community we operate in and many have stated that they were not familiar with cold pressed juices or the differences between our juices as compared to typical beverage options available in conventional grocery stores. Belli’s presence has also increased awareness to food production as we highlight local & urban farms that we purchase from. We believe this to be a positive impact on the community that was previously desolate with healthy food options where many consumers did not question where their food was coming from.

- ii. Goal/Objective 2: Increasing storefront sales by improving product display and expanding the availability & variety of products in our storefront location.

Progress Made: We have increased sales both by expanding storage of food retail with new refrigeration equipment and by growing our juice bar menu to include salads, vegetable bowls, & other vegetarian options utilizing local food. The menu variety allows for customers to purchase more than beverages & has been successful in incorporating locally produced food.

Impact on Community: Our customers continue to enjoy the added options for lunch, & we have focused more on food service than food retail with these equipment purchases. This allows for both residents of Pilsen and those who work in the community to consume a healthy lunch in an area that lacks many healthy options. It has also increased awareness to making healthier choices as many first time customers have exclaimed that they are new to eating vegetarian & many of the food alternatives we offer.

iii. Goal/Objective 3: Increase the impact and frequency of our community outreach activities.

Progress Made: Belli's actively & enthusiastically participates & volunteers in many community activities including health events, local community meetings, urban community garden meetings as well as speaking to students of all ages about local food and healthy options. Belli's has sampled juice & presented at events that focus on community health & local food. Our greatest impact thus far was after hosting the entire elementary school on five days of field trips with over 500 students. Students learned about juice production & how we use local food ingredients in our juice bar menu. Many students have returned with families to purchase Belli's juice & smoothies.

Impact on Community: Belli's outreach initiatives have led to more community residents becoming customers and learning about local food, and we have cut across language barriers by creating both a Spanish-speaking & English-speaking environment at the juice bar. We have also built partnerships & collaborations with educational organizations who invite us to attend events annually regarding healthy options at Belli's. We are able to highlight our values that include supporting local food producers during these events, and believe that to impact residents who would not otherwise question food sources as consumers.

v. Goal/Objective 4: Adding one full time and retaining two part-time employees

Progress Made: Belli's has two full-time juice bar managers, and one part time employee. We started business with solely one employee, the owner and have been able to create up to 7 part time positions during the summer because of our increased production with the equipment we purchased.

Impact on Community: Belli's hires locally, and I believe this to be an important impact as we are able to reach to area residents through both food production and through job production. Hiring local residents has also increased awareness of our values that our employees learn and embrace, which creates a more sustainable community that values local food and businesses that support common values. One of our greatest impacts as a business is on our employees who support and represent our juice bar and it's mission to the fullest.

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, 20__). Include further explanation if necessary.
 - i. Number of direct jobs created: 2 full time 1 part time
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: 2 full time 1 part time
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: 1 part time driver
 - iv. Number of markets expanded: (Economically) 1, We have expanded our juicebar market.
 - v. Number of new markets established: (Economically) 1, We have established a food retail market.
 - vi. Market sales increased by \$11250 and increased by 79%.
 - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 42
 - a. Percent Increase: 27%

3. Did you expand your customer base by reaching new populations such as new ethnic groups, additional low income/low access populations, new businesses, etc.? If so, how? Yes, we have expanded our customer base by reaching new populations including low income/low access populations within the community we reside. The Pilsen neighborhood did not have access to a permanent location for local food & we now have regular customers that are from the community who purchase weekly produce shares, cage free eggs, meats, & more. Customers were reached through social media efforts as well as flyer and print media promotions, and our menu and other promotional efforts have included Spanish translations to reach out to diverse populations in the neighborhood.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.
 - i. Who are your community partners? Belli's has collaborated with neighboring Jungman elementary school as well as community gardens for the summer season. We are also currently building partnerships other local non-profits that focus on health & nutrition.
 - ii. How have they contributed to the results you've already achieved? Creating relationships with our community partnerships expands our customer base which allows for more demand. We are also able to create greater awareness and increase food education initiatives through our partner's networks.
 - iii. How will they contribute to future results? Future results can be achieved by increasing demand through further collaboration with our partners and building a network that supports local food.

5. Did you use contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project? No we are not using contractors to conduct any work.

6. Have you publicized any results yet?* Yes we published the first report

- i. If yes, how did you publicize the results? We sent out a newsletter for the first report and also printed out a summary of the results for customers to read at the check out.
 - ii. To whom did you publicize the results? Customers and residents signed up to our electronic newsletter
 - iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? Over 200
- *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? We collected information last year through emails, a newsletter, and in conversations at the storefront.
8. What feedback have you collected thus far (specific comments)? Much of the feedback we have received includes interest in the LFPP program both from food industry groups as well as from customers. Our customers who did read our informational emails and posts are much more supportive to our mission as a business in support of local food after learning about the LFPP grant & program. Spreading information about the LFPP program seems to help create conversation on our values as a business that has helped to create regular customers that sustain our business.
9. Budget Summary:
- i. As part of the LFPP 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? Yes
 - iii. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used? Yes, Income generated was used to sustain & create full time and part-time jobs as well as to increase inventory and purchase new equipment.
10. Lessons Learned:
- i. Summarize any lessons learned. Draw from 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).
 - Equipment in our case at the juice bar helped to save us money and time, and we learned that we were able to direct more revenue to other avenues because of this. I learned that by cutting time and improving efficiency in our juice production, we could profit more as an entity. Our negative experiences deal mainly with government regulation, and we learned that we will need to focus on researching more in depth and working with our health department before operating a food business. Because the state of Illinois does not allow wholesale of raw juice, we are unable to grow as a business beyond our storefront. The city of Chicago

has also regulated our business practices, and in the future, we will need to take all city and state regulations in account before operating. I also learned personally as a business owner that owning a business that has a specific mission, goals, and values is challenging in our current economic system that adheres to mainly a quantitative profit. Belli's and businesses that support local food producers are trying to shape a new system where quality is also considered- quality of both food and quality of life for our food producers. Consumers are able to make decisions based on those values, and I have learned as a business owner that this is where we are able to make the largest impact, by implementing our values in supporting local food and food producers.

- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving: A majority of our goals are being achieved as we operate on a daily basis. As a business owner in the future, I would research all government regulations in regards to conducting business operations. To save time, working with professionals and attorneys in the industry can help to 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: I would suggest following financial projections monthly to keep finances on track; ultimately, a successful project is one that makes money to keep the business in business! Finances are key to keeping a business sustainable, and being able to cut costs with efficient equipment is necessary. Our best decisions as a business include purchasing the GoodNature and other juice and refrigeration equipment that has helped to increase capacity and juice production.

11. 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? I will continue to support local food producers by adhering to our values and purchasing directly from farmers or local food distributors. Belli's will also continue to offer and provide education and awareness outreach to the community on healthy alternatives and the benefits of many of the products we offer. Ultimately, I want to grow our business operations to a production site outside of the current location to more effectively operate for the community. I also want to focus on enhancing the products we offer to reach new markets. Because we have been able to increase our capacity through the LFPP Program, we can now focus on creating and increasing the demand in the future to meet this capacity.
- 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? I am currently working on expanding our juice retail to reach new markets despite the many government regulations. I am working to connect with like-minded organizations and have reached out to collaborators to help our business

in connecting with them to sell our juices within regulations required. I have also researched the juice industry and retail markets in other states that have looser regulations on raw juice. In the end, business will need to expand in order for Belli's to reach and advance our project goals.