

## 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 LFPP staff to avoid delays:

LFPP Phone: 202-720-2731; Email: [USDALFPPQuestions@ams.usda.gov](mailto: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.

<b>Report Date Range:</b> <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	September 30, 2015-March 31, 2016
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<b>Recipient Organization Name:</b>	Piazza Produce and Specialty Foods
<b>Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:</b>	Planning Study for Increasing Access to Local Produce through USDA's Summer Food Service Program and a Mobile Market in Indianapolis Food Deserts
<b>Grant Agreement Number:</b> <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	15LFPPIN0153
<b>Year Grant was Awarded:</b>	2015
<b>Project City/State:</b>	Indianapolis, IN
<b>Total Awarded Budget:</b>	\$24,948.14

LFPP 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: Rachel Miller; Email: [miller@piazzaproduce.com](mailto:miller@piazzaproduce.com) Phone: 317.522.2921

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**The issue:** Indianapolis is ranked one of the top food deserts in the nation. Living in a food desert is a precursor to diseases. Many families don't have access to fresh, local produce. Piazza Produce and Specialty Foods (PPSF), a family-owned produce distributor, will develop a plan to bring access of fresh, local produce to food deserts, low income children and families across Indianapolis. The planning phase will research the possibility of distributing local produce through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and a mobile market that travels to food deserts in Indianapolis.

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 1: Completed business plan for mobile market to travel to Summer Food Service Program sites in Indianapolis food deserts.**

Objective 1: Research mobile market vehicles to include set-up, cost and maintenance.

- **Progress Made:** After compiling the budget, it was determined that PPSF would not be able to sustain a mobile market. The SFSP in Indianapolis operates seven (7) weeks each summer. The budget for the mobile market is \$219,840. Due to the high cost of the vehicle and short time the vehicle would be in operation each year, the mobile market would not be sustainable for PPSF.
- **Impact on Community:** The budget could be used as a reference for any organization considering a mobile market. Contact PPSF for a copy of the budget.

Objective 2: Network with successful mobile markets programs to gain understanding of business models.

- **Progress Made:** Over twenty (20) hours of phone interviews were conducted with mobile markets across the country. The common theme with all mobile markets was sustainability and community partners. Several of the mobile markets were no longer in operation due to not having new or additional grant funds to sustain the market. The mobile markets that were successful had major community partners such as hospitals, schools and local government. The community partners are providing ample funds to assure the sustainability of the market in their community. All successful mobile markets indicated they wouldn't be sustainable without the funding from community partners.
- **Impact on Community:** The results discovered could be used by organizations to plan for sustainability of a mobile market and secure partners who can provide funding and support.

Objective 3: Complete a site visit to the YMCA Veggie Van in Grand Rapids, Michigan to see a successful mobile market option.

- **Progress Made:** The site visit to Michigan was not completed due to the decision for PPSF to not operate a mobile market as a means to distribute local produce to the Indianapolis community. Travel funds were utilized to visit local farmers and processors in Michigan and Indiana.
- **Impact on Community:** The local farmers learned about the opportunities to provide produce for the SFSP in Indianapolis for the summer of 2017. The visits

allowed for planning between PPSF, farmers and processors. Farmers now have ample time to plan crops for the SFSP in summer of 2017.

Objective 4: Meet with community partners to identify top areas of need in Indianapolis.

Progress Made: Meetings were held with five Indianapolis school districts to identify areas of need in their districts. The five school districts represent over 60,000 students in the Indianapolis area. A meeting with Gleaners Food Bank and Indy Hunger Network helped identify areas outside of the five school districts that are in need of access to local produce in Indianapolis. Areas considered were Indianapolis food deserts, low income areas and areas of high concentration of students on the free and reduced meal programs.

- Impact on Community: The list of Indianapolis areas in need will be shared with community partners and school districts. The areas identified will be a part of PPSF planning phase to distribute local produce through the SFSP.

Objective 5: Create a plan for local produce items available on mobile market.

- Progress Made: The local produce list for the mobile market was completed. Sixteen local produce items were identified to sell on the mobile market. Meetings were held with eight local farmers to discuss their local produce offerings, procurement, transportation and collaboration on this project.
- Impact on Community: Local farmers will have increased sales and distribution of their product. Local farmers have been notified that PPSF will not be operating a mobile market but the produce items identified will be utilized in SFSP 2017.

Objective 6: Create a complete budget for purchase, operation and maintenance of mobile market.

- Progress Made: The mobile market budget was completed. Contact PPSF for a copy of the budget.
- Impact on Community: The budget could be used as a reference for any organization considering a mobile market.

ii. **Goal 2: Completed business plan for collaborating with SFSP site Directors to purchase and menu local produce on their SFSP menus.**

Objective 1: Meet with local farmers to identify local produce options available during summer months. Understand farmer's challenges and input on program.

- Progress Made: Meetings were conducted with eight (8) local farmers to address their challenges in providing local produce to PPSF. Common challenges for farmers was unpredictable weather and crop yields to meet PPSF needs. All farmers requested pre-orders and commitment to purchase orders before growing.

A list was compiled of items available for June and July, 2017.

- Impact on Community: Local produce will be purchased by PPSF and distributed to five (5) Indiana school districts operating the SFSP. This will increase a farmer's revenue and ability to provide jobs.

Objective 2: Meet with SFSP sponsors to gain understanding of their SFSP needs and challenges in regards to fresh local produce.

- Progress Made: Meetings were held with five (5) Indianapolis Food Service Directors to address their needs and concerns with purchasing local produce for the SFSP. All Directors have committed to purchasing local produce from PPSF

for the SFSP 2017. Directors stated that the produce must be in a usable form. Examples: corn needs to be shucked and cut in halves, cabbage needs to be shredded, green beans need to be cleaned and trimmed, and cantaloupe needs to be diced or wedged. All items offered must have recipes, cooking instructions if applicable and nutrient analysis of the recipes. The districts want to advertise that they are serving local produce in the SFSP. The Food Service Directors requested a logo to put on menus and marketing materials to identify any local produce items.

- **Impact on Community:** The five school districts serve over seven thousand (7,000) summer meals a day. On average, the districts offer the SFSP for six (6) weeks between June and July. Due to this project, local produce will be offered at seventy (70) SFSP sites in Indianapolis. Community members will be able to identify local produce that is served by a logo that will be developed. There will be a substantial increase in purchases of local produce over previous years for the SFSP. The farmers will have a significant increase in revenue from produce purchased and distributed by PPSF versus previous years. The increase purchases may help provide jobs at farms and processing facilities.

**Objective 3:** Create local produce product list for SFSP sponsors to pre-order produce and submit estimated usage.

- **Progress Made:** The SFSP local produce preorder form was created. Orders must be placed by January 1, 2017 by each school district.
- **Impact on Community:** The preorder forms will be shared with local farmers to assist with crop planning and volume estimates.

**Objective 4:** Create marketing plan to gain visibility with SFSP sponsors and community members. Marketing plan would include how SFSP would indicate local produce on their SFSP menu.

- **Progress Made:** Meetings were held with SFSP sponsors to plan how to communicate to their community that local produce is being served in the SFSP. All school districts have public relations departments (PRD) that communicate with their community members on a regular basis. All Food Service Directors will work directly with their PRD to publicize the use of local produce in the SFSP through social media. The SFSP menu will be sent home with all students and posted on school districts websites. The menu will have a local produce logo next to any menu item that is local. PPSF will work with CODO, marketing firm in Indianapolis, to develop a local produce logo to be used by all school districts.
- **Impact on Community:** The community will be aware that local produce is being served in SFSP. The advertising of local produce in the SFSP may increase participation in the program from support gained by each local community due to this project.

**iii. Goal 3: Apply and be approved as a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) retail merchant.**

**Objective 1:** Research and gain understanding on SNAP

- **Progress Made:** 26 hours were spent reading official SNAP documents and studying the documents for understanding, including: 2015 Woman Infant and Children (WIC) Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) Handbook, Complete SNAP Guide, Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP), WIC

Application Package Market, and Market Master Applications. After reviewing all documents, meetings were scheduled with the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) and Gleaners Food Bank to learn from their operations' success with SNAP and mobile markets.

- **Impact on Community:** The Indiana State Department of Health currently has a USDA grant to implement Indiana Fresh Bucks. This is an incentive program for SNAP participants to purchase local produce from farmers' markets. The program has struggled due to a low number of SNAP recipients attending farmers' markets. Currently in Indiana only eight percent (8%) of SNAP dollars are used to purchase fresh produce. Gleaners Food Bank gives customers free items that are not SNAP eligible in addition to accepting SNAP dollars. The free items are donated from local stores and could include paper goods, bakery goods and certain bread items. Gleaners belief is that customers won't come to their facility for SNAP eligible items only, they need additional items to make their grocery purchases complete. Upon completing this research PPSF determined that a mobile market offering only local produce would not be sustainable.

Objective 2: Attend SNAP training for retailers.

- **Progress Made:** Rachel Miller, PPSP School Specialist, attended the 2016 Indiana Farmers' Market Forum which had a presentation on SNAP, WIC and Incentive Implementation.
- **Impact on Community:** Knowledge was gained by several Indiana organizations on how to apply to be a SNAP retailer. The training will increase the number of SNAP retailers in Indiana and give SNAP program users addition opportunities to spend program dollars. If PPSF would apply to be a SNAP retailer in the future, one of their staff members is trained on the program requirements.

Objective 3: Apply to be a SNAP retailer.

- **Progress Made:** PPSF did not apply to be a SNAP retailer after hours of research were conducted and analyzed on the sustainability of a mobile market with the option to purchase local produce with SNAP dollars.
- **Impact on Community:** After reviewing all the research on mobile markets PPSF will not be implementing a mobile market. Therefore, there is not a need to be a SNAP retailer at this time. As a means to distribute local produce to Indianapolis areas in need, PPSF will concentrate on procuring and distributing local produce through the SFSP.

2. Quantify the overall impact of the project on the intended beneficiaries, if applicable, from the baseline date (the start of the award performance period, September 30, 2015). Include further explanation if necessary.
  - i. Number of direct jobs created: N/A
  - ii. Number of jobs retained: N/A
  - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: N/A
  - iv. Number of markets expanded: Many markets will be expanded. Data will be collected in summer 2017.
  - v. Number of new markets established: Many ethnic groups, low income families and children will have access to local produce in the summer 2017. The five (5) school districts have not offered local produce in past SFSP. Local produce will now be

available for thirty (30) days in the summer of 2017 at seventy (70) SFSP sites across Indianapolis. Further data will be collected in the summer of 2017.

- vi. Market sales increased by \$0 and increased by 0%. The data will be collected in the summer of 2017.
- vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: Eight (8) farmers and three (3) produce processing facilities will be impacted by this project.
  - Percent Increase: 100%

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?

Indianapolis is a very diverse city. With over seventy (70) SFSP sites across Indianapolis offering local produce, many new ethnic groups will be reached. SFSP only operates in low income areas, therefore children will be consuming the local produce first-hand through the SFSP. When the SFSP local produce program is implemented in summer of 2017, data will be collected on number of meals served with local produce offered. The collected data will support the statement above. All five school districts who are committed to purchasing local produce for the SFSP are new customers for the local farmers.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

- i. Who are your community partners?
- ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project?
- iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this LFPP grant?

The support for this project has been phenomenal.

Below is a list of key partners:

**Indiana Department of Education Farm to School Network (IF2SN)**

The IF2SN has monthly meetings where the PPSF LFPP is discussed by Rachel Miller, PPSF School Specialist. Food service directors, government officials and farmers are learning about the SFSP local produce project. IF2SN wants to collaborate on a local harvest of the month program for schools for the 2017-2018 school year. After the summer of 2017, IF2SN will help implement and educate schools across Indiana on the opportunity to participate in the SFSP local produce project.

**Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH)**

ISDH Food Protection Program has launched a new initiative to address the safety of whole, uncut produce sold in the wholesale food distribution chain. The goal of this initiative is to encourage produce farmers to adopt Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and good handling practices to prevent contamination of produce from farm to distribution. The Produce Safety Initiative is still developing as the Standards for Produce Safety are being established under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). These federal standards will affect many produce operations that grow, harvest, pack, or store produce. ISDH Food Safety Farm Consultants are available to help growers comply with FSMA standards and to manage risk from the farm to the packing shed. The top concern from food service directors on purchasing local produce is food safety. ISDH educates, trains and helps register local farms. The list of registered Indiana farms will be shared with all Indiana schools and can be found on the ISDH website.

**Purdue Cooperative Extension (PCE)**

PCE has been instrumental with the PPSF LFPP grant process. They provided a grant writing work shop for the LFPP planning grant. After the workshop, they have served as

a resource for general questions. PCE gave a letter of support of the PPSF LFPP. Moving forward, PCE offers several educational classes and seminars regarding the PCE Local Foods Program and food safety practices for schools and farmers.

PCE is also a member of the IF2SN. Future endeavors with PCE are recipe development for local foods and planning a local harvest of the month tool kit for schools.

**Metropolitan School District of Perry Township,**  
**Metropolitan School District of Wayne Township,**  
**Metropolitan School District of Lawrence Township,**  
**Metropolitan School District of Decatur Township,**  
**The Oaks Academy**

Food Service Directors from above townships have attended multiple meetings to plan for serving local produce in the SFSP 2017. All have given a commitment to submit a local produce pre-order for the SFSP 2017. All districts have committed to purchasing the local produce available and developing a SFSP menu to identify these local items. Each Director will be working with their PRD to advertise local produce in the SFSP served in their community. In early 2017, PPSF will be working with these districts on recipe development and cooking techniques for local produce. Collaboration between PPSF and the districts will continue to coordinate distribution, pricing, and dates local produce should be served in the SFSP.

**Strawridge Farms, Garwood Orchards, Peaper Brothers, Graham Farms, Earthlink Farm, Wanning Farms, Goins Blueberry Farm and Michael Farms**

These local farms are committed to providing local produce for the SFSP 2017. Meetings were conducted with all eight (8) farms. Rachel Miller, PPSF School Specialist, did tours with two (2) of the further processing plants and two (2) local farms. The farmers will strive to fulfill all the orders that will be submitted by school districts in January 2017. Each farm has been instrumental in identifying the items that will be available for purchase by the schools. Communication will be constant between the farms and PPSF to identify any issues with planting, growing, purchasing or providing the desired quantity of local produce.

**Mossy Oak and Peterson Farms**

Mossy Oak and Peterson Farms are further processors of local produce. They convert items like tomatoes into salsa, apples into sliced apples and applesauce cups, clean and trim green beans and make marinara sauce with local kale. Their company missions fit with the needs of the school districts. They produce items in a usable form for schools. In future months, PPSF will be testing their products and determining items to add to the SFSP 2017 local produce pre-order form.

**Piazza Produce Garden Cut Division**

Garden Cut is a further processor and have committed their support on the PPSF LFPP project. Garden Cut will slice and dice produce to the schools' needs as it arrives from the farms. PPSF will be working with Garden Cut to identify cuts, packaging and a calendar for the SFSP local produce program.

5. Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project?

Rogers K12 (RK12) is the contractor on the LFPP project. RK12 has scheduled and conducted meetings with Food Service Directors, developed forms needed, conducted phone interviews with mobile markets, attended meetings with community partners, wrote meeting minutes and

authored the LFPP final report with assistance from PPSF.

6. Have you publicized any results yet?\*

- i. If yes, how did you publicize the results? Project updates were given to local farmers, leadership at PPSF, Indiana Farm to School Network and Food Service Directors.
- ii. To whom did you publicize the results? Communication was given to key stakeholders on the PPSF local produce project.
- iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? The number of stakeholders reached on announcing the LFPP program was ample. Due to large attendance at many of the meetings where the project was discussed (Indiana Farm to School Network, West Indy Cooperative Meetings, Food Service Director Meetings) a firm number cannot be quantified. It can be stated that eight (8) farmers, five (5) school districts, three (3) produce processors and three (3) major community partners have been educated on the results of the PPSF LFPP planning project.

\*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). N/A

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

- i. If so, how did you collect the information? All feedback on the PPSF LFPP has been verbal or via email.
- ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?  
Farmer: "I am excited about the opportunity to provide local produce to the schools. PPSF helping with the distribution piece is crucial."  
School: "We have always wanted to serve local produce in our program. Due to food safety issues and distribution challenges it has not happened. Our students and community members will appreciate that the produce we serve in the SFSP will be local. We are willing to pay a little extra money to purchase from a local farm."

8. 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:
- ii. Did the project generate any income? No

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).
  - Schools want to purchase local produce but indicated they don't have the time or resources to work directly with farmers.
  - Farmers want to provide local produce to schools but need estimated volumes and assurance that the schools will purchase the product.
  - Schools need the local produce in a usable form. Many districts don't have large staffs in the summer that can slice, dice and clean local produce.
  - Schools want a local produce toolkit that would include recipes, cooking techniques and nutrient analysis.

- Schools are concerned about food safety when purchasing produce from a local farmer.
  - Branding the local produce items with a logo will be important for the success of the PPSF implementation of the local foods program.
  - A mobile market can't be sustained by operating seven (7) weeks out of the year.
  - Mobile markets need community partners and funding to be sustainable.
  - Mobile markets need to offer more than local produce to be sustainable.
  - PPSF distributing local produce for the SFSP 2017 will have the largest impact on its goal of distributing local produce to the highest areas of need in Indianapolis.
  - PPSF is willing to share local produce pre-order form and the mobile market budget.
- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving: N/A
- 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:
- If interested in a mobile market, it is best to find a market that is already in operation and ask for their truck design. To design a truck would take considerable time when considering size, refrigeration, freezer, and dry storage. Work with current successful mobile markets to learn about what they offer and how they are sustainable.

#### 10. Future Work:

- i. How will you continue the work of this project beyond the performance period? In other words, how will you parlay the results of your project's work to benefit future community goals and initiatives? Include information about community impact and outreach, anticipated increases in markets and/or sales, estimated number of jobs retained/created, and any other information you'd like to share about the future of your project.
- PPSF will apply for a 2016 LFPP implementation grant. Regardless of the awarding of the grant, PPSF will move forward to offer local produce for the SFSP 2017 in five (5) Indianapolis school districts.
  - Data will be collected at the SFSP 2017 to include but not be limited to: pounds of each type of local produce sold, number of children produce was offered to through the SFSP, and number of sites the produce was offered at in Indianapolis.
  - Data will be collected on the number of sites that are offering local produce in food deserts through the SFSP.
  - A local produce toolkit will be developed to include: cooking techniques, farm information, sample menus, recipes and nutrient analysis.
  - PPSF will work with CODO to develop a local produce logo to be used on all SFSP menus, websites and press releases.
  - PPSF will do a press release in June 2017 regarding the LFPP program in Indianapolis.
  - PPSF will continue to work with the local farmers on local produce availability and distribution.

- Data will be collected from local farmers and produce processors on estimated number of jobs created due to the PPSF LFPP.
- 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?
- After the SFSP 2017, PPSF has a goal to offer local produce program to all Indiana schools and programs who operate the SFSP.
  - PPSP will work with the IF2SN and PCE to develop a local harvest of the month program for the 2017-2018 school year.
  - PPSP will work with the IF2SN and PCE to develop a toolkit for the local harvest of the month program to include: purchasing procedures, farmer information, sample menus, recipes, produce food safety operating procedures and marketing materials.