

Farmers Market Promotion Program

Final Performance Report

For the Period of October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2016

Date: December 29, 2016
Recipient Name: Community Farm Alliance
Project Title: Kentucky Farmers Market Support Program
Grant Number: 14-FMPPX-KY-0071
Project Location: Frankfort, Kentucky
Year of Grant Award: 2014
Amount Awarded: \$98,515
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Program Summary:

"Provide a brief summary regarding the goals and objectives, activities performed, beneficiaries, collaborators, and your most impressive (result) measurement.

The Kentucky Farmers Market Support Program (FMSP) builds upon the success of Community Farm Alliance's Eastern Kentucky Farmers Market Support Program Pilot Project; initiated in 2013 to provide new and struggling rural farmers markets with the tools and technical assistance for sustainability and to provide greater access to all consumers, especially low-income, of locally grown products.

The goals of the KFMSPP are to 1) Provide pre-season workshops and toolkits to farmers markets for business and market development (including strategic planning, governance, vendor training, marketing strategies), and for participation in SNAP, WIC, SFMNP and the Summer Feeding Program; 2) Provide in-season technical assistance to continually address issues and problems as they arise.

Initially serving five markets, primarily in Eastern Kentucky (all in the Kentucky Strike Force, including two in the Southeastern Kentucky Promise Zone), over the two-year grant period the FMSP has grown to 30 markets statewide (doubling the target goal).

Goals and Objectives:

"Describe the general goals and objectives (scope) of the project:

The FMSP's objective is to aggregate financial and technical support resources through collaborative resource providers, toolkits, workshops, and capital support to create a comprehensive, holistic support system for Kentucky farmers markets that *creates sustainable public markets and increase farm profits and greater access to all consumers, especially low-income, of locally grown products.*

Goal #1: Provide pre-season workshops and toolkits to 15 farmers markets for business and market development; including strategic planning, governance, vendor training, marketing strategies, and participation in SNAP, WIC, SFMNP and the Summer Feeding Program.

Goal #2: Provide in-season technical assistance. The Kentucky Farmers Market Support Program provides new and existing markets with the tools, resources and technical assistance that increases their chances of sustainability and market growth, including allowing them to fully participate in SNAP, WIC, Senior Farmers Market Nutrition and Summer Feeding Programs.

Indicate the need for the grant project prior to the implementation of grant activities.

Often recognized as an integral part of any community, farmers' markets have many benefits; including encouraging healthier eating habits, spurring community and economic development, and serving as an important retail outlet for small scale and beginning farmers. Beyond being a traditional retail outlet, farmers' markets offer the potential to aggregate local food products, playing a much-needed role in the infrastructure of local food distribution, particularly to public schools.

Despite the proliferation of farmers markets in Kentucky in recent years, rural farmers markets still struggle to achieve sustainable growth or some cases even get launched. Without a holistic support system many struggling markets will fail and new markets will not develop. This is especially true in Eastern Kentucky where seven counties do not have a farmers market. While many funding opportunities and support resources exist in Kentucky for farmers markets, these resources are typically uncoordinated and often fail to address the farmers' market's critical need for manpower, marketing support and capitalization. Federal nutrition programs such as WIC, SFMNP and SNAP represent significant potential market sales but remain out of reach without technical assistance.

Activities:

"Describe the activities used to achieve the goals and objectives. This should include measurement of any baseline data. Include significant contribution/roles(s) of project partners.

From surveys of farmers markets and observed over the four years of the FMSP, there five clear factors that significantly influence a farmers market sustainability: a) A clear organizational structure; b) A dedicated Market Manager; c) Community support and engagement; d) Incentive programs and events that increase fresh food access, access federal nutrition programs, and build community; and e) A consistent physical location.

Through its FMPP grant Community Farm Alliance (CFA) has built a coalition of partners who together have worked to help a growing list of Kentucky farmers markets develop these five factors. CFA and the Kentucky Center for Ag and Rural Development (KCARD) have provide an annual series of workshops and in season one-to-one technical assistance to help markets with leaderships development, governance and business planning. CFA and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA) have provided job descriptions, work planning and personal development for farmers market managers. Through separate funding CFA has also provided markets with a Market Manager cost share.

CFA and the Partnership for a Fit Kentucky (led by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and funded by a CDC grant) have provided markets with training and funding to build community support and outreach. CFA and KDA have provided training and technical support to enable markets to accept SNAP, WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program benefits. CFA with separate funding (including from Managed Care Organizations) have provide funding and technical assistance to markets to initiate "Double Dollar" incentive programs for participants of SNAP, WIC and SFMNP. CFA and the Kentucky Department of Education have provide training and technical assistance for markets to become Summer Feeding Program sites, including the use of seasonal farmers market products. CFA, KCARD and the Governor's Office of Ag Policy have provide markets with location and permanent structure development.

Date	Activity	Baseline	Participants
9/14-12/14	2015 Program trainings designed, trainers and locations	NA	
Nov. 2014	2015 program announced/ applications accepted	NA	
11/7/14	Webinar: Food access incentives	5	12
Jan. 2015	15 markets selected for program	6	15
1/22/15	Webinar- 2015 workshops and program strategies	0	13
2/5/15	Workshop - Org Development and Planning Eastern KY	5	16
3/18/15	Workshop - Org Development and Planning Central KY	0	5
3/26/15	Workshop - Food Access, Community Outreach and Marketing Eastern KY	5	18
Feb. 2015	CFA Farmers Market Support Program Facebook Page	0	26
3/1/15	CFA Farmers Market Support Program Google Group	0	37
4/1/15	Workshop - Food Access, Community Outreach and Marketing Central KY	0	4
4/2/15	Workshop- Farmer/Vendor Support and Operations EKY	5	17
4/15/15	Workshop- Farmer/Vendor Support and Operations	0	5
8/10/15	Webinar- Conflict Resolution	0	7
10/8/15	Webinar- Board development	0	9
10/13/15	KY Farmers Market Fall Newsletter	0	48
11/12/14	Partnership for a Fit Kentucky Farmers' Market Committee	0	5
11/15 - 3/16	CFA Farmers Market Support Program Facebook Page	26	41
11/1/15 - 3/31/16	CFA Farmers Market Support Program Google Group	37	64
Nov - Dec 2015	2015 market data collection	6	9
12/1/15	End of Season Gathering	0	33
1/25/16	Farmacy Program Planning	0	2
2/10/16	2016 program applications and surveys submitted	15	36
2/22/16	Louisville Market manager Facebook Group creation	0	15
3/24/16	Morehead vendor support meeting	0	50
4/4/16	FMSP Introduction and Discussion Webinar	13	13
4/12/16	FMSP Workshop Elizabethtown KY	0	4
4/13/16	FMSP Workshop Berea KY	0	6
5/16/16	Boyle County FM Technical Assistance Visit with Board	0	7
5/18/16	Whitley County FM Technical Assistance Phone Call	0	2
5/20/16	Knox County FM Technical Assistance visit with Board	0	8

5/26/16	Franklin County FM Technical Assistance visit at market	0	8
5/28/16	Westport Rd. FM T.A Visit at market and board meeting	0	14
6/4/16	Jeffersontown FM T.A. Visit at market	0	20
6/7/16	Clinton County FM T.A. visit with Board	0	6
6/8/16	Partnership for a Fit Kentucky Meeting with state partners	5	12
6/11/16	Farmers Market (Columbia, KY) T.A. market visit	20	25
6/15/16	SoKY Marketplace (Bowling Green, KY) TA Leadership team visit	0	3
6/17/16	Meeting with State coordinator for KY FM WIC vouchers	0	2
6/25/16	Perry County FM T.A. market visit	0	15
6/29/16	Letcher County/Whitesburg FM T.A. market visit	0	35
7/1/16	Louisville FM Workshop with FoodWorks Louisville interns	0	8
7/2/16	Downtown Richmond FM T.A. market visit	0	25
7/13/16	Partnership for a Fit Kentucky Meeting with state partners	12	16
7/19/16	Meeting with SMFNP KDA administrators	0	3
7/23/16	Independence FM T.A. market visit	0	15
7/25/16	FMSP Implementation Webinar	0	22
8/9/16	Franklin Co FM Press Event and TA Visit	0	50
8/13/16	Bardstown Rd. FM press Event and TA Visit	0	30
8/17/16	FMSP Powermail Newsletter	38	69
9/1/16	Jeffersontown FM T.A. market manager visit	0	2
9/10/16	Jeffersontown FM T.A. Market visit #2	0	17
9/12/16	Monday Webinar Series: Maximizing Your Social Media Presence	0	11
9/14/16	Farmers Market Food Safety training	0	15

Accomplishments:

"Describe what was accomplished during the entire project using measurable results

Community Farm Alliance’s Farmers Market Support Program was created to supplement and support the Kentucky Department of Agriculture’s (KDA) excellent but limited (one staff person for 160 markets statewide) Farmers Market Program. Today the two programs are collaborative and coordinating to better serve Kentucky’s farmers markets – a major successful objective.

The momentum of farmers market development in Kentucky continues to expand through not only Community Farm Alliance’s Farmers Market Support Program but also through a parallel collation of food and nutrition related organizations organized through the Partnership for a Fit Kentucky. The PFFKY with support from a CDC grant and the collaboration of CFA has supported statewide stakeholder meetings that include multiple state agencies and community foundations, and provided annual mini-grants for local health departments to partner with farmers markets. This combined efforts has helped to increase the interest of farmers markets and the application of 36 farmers markets to CFA’s FMSP for 2016. The FMSP through FMPP and other funding now provides programmatic support in the form of Double Dollars, Market Manager Cost-share, and/or Technical Assistance to 20% of the state’s 158

registered Farmers' Markets.

Over the grant period, as a direct result of technical support provide through FMPP funding, at least five farmers are now accepting SNAP benefits, 24 farmers markets have implemented a food access incentive program, two markets are Summer Feeding Program sites, and from 2014-2015 15 markets have grown sales by at least 33% (2016 sales are still being cumulated). Sales from SNAP/WIC/SFMNP coupled with incentives now account for an average of 13% of markets sales.

Complete information about Community Farm Alliance's Farmers Market Support Program can be found on the website: <http://cfaky.org/what-we-do/fmsp/>. The 2016 Final Report will be available by mid-January 2017.

The success of Community Farm Alliance's Farmers Market Support Program has come with challenges. The continued growth of the FMSP, especially for 2016 has caused CFA to rethink (with input from the markets) about the best technical assistance delivery means. In 2015 CFA went to regional workshops, from centralized workshops in 2014, developed a more robust webinar series, and provide substantially more one-to-one market assistance.

With more and more markets striving to be open more months and a multitude of conferences in the "off-season", markets and their managers/ leadership have less time for face-to-face meetings that require travel, especially with winter weather. CFA's revised strategy is to "meet the people where they are." This often means piggybacking with other meetings covering related topics and relying on web-based communications. Nonetheless, the Annual Kentucky Farmers Market Gathering remains a significant event for the farmers markets, especially for the opportunity to network and share best practices. CFA regards these challenges and the evolution of solution as a positive outcome of the program's success and ability to adapt to the needs of Kentucky's farmers markets.

Perhaps the biggest difference between the initial proposal and its implementation has been with "toolkits." CFA envisioned creating both hard and digital (DVD) versions copies. Paper-based toolkits for farmers markets are undeniably valuable but often are left on a shelf. DVD-based toolkits can be stored on a computer but are also likely to go unused. Both mediums are also challenging to update with new and timely information. Web-based toolkits are potentially more assessable and many organizations have excellent versions available. Moving forward, with input from the markets, CFA and KDA will explore the most accessible, useful information delivery system to provide the markets with information "at their fingertips."

Goal #1		Objectives	Actual
	CFA, KCARD (subcontractor), and KDA will conduct three workshops for 1) Farmers market business development, 2) Marketing develop for markets and vendors, and 3) How to increase food access through SNAP, WIC, SFMNP and the Summer Feeding Program.		
Oct. 2014	2014 Toolkits revised updated, printed and digitized. Workshops planned, presentations arranged, site logistics confirmed.		
Nov. 2014			
– Feb. 2015	3 workshops for 10 markets with two representative per market	60	98
March. 2015	Workshops evaluated, market season data collection system designed.		
Oct. 2015	2014 Toolkits revised updated, printed and digitized. Workshops planned, presentations arranged, site logistics confirmed.		
Nov. 2015			
– Feb. 2016	3 workshops for 15 markets with two representative per market	90	93

March. 2016	Workshops evaluated, market season data collection system	150	191
Goal #2	CFA and KDA provide on-going technical assistance during the market season through on-site visits, webinars and gatherings		
		Objectives	Actual
February - March 2015	CFA staff attends individual market annual meetings as requested by markets.		
April - October 2015	Monthly webinars for market managers for networking	30	41
	Market site visits.	20	0
	Monthly data collection and status updates on sales, SNAP/WIC participation		
October - December 2015	End of season reports and evaluations		
February - March 2016	CFA staff attends individual market annual meetings as requested by markets.		
April - October 2016	Monthly webinars for market managers for networking	45	46
	Market site visits.	30	202
	Monthly data collection and status updates on sales, SNAP/WIC participation		
October - December 2016	End of season reports and evaluations		
		125	289

Beneficiaries:

"Describe and provide the actual numbers for both the direct and indirect beneficiaries of grant activities.

A major focus of Community Farm Alliance's Farmers Market Support Program technical assistance provided through FMPP funding, including organization and marketing development, has been to enable Kentucky farmers markets to participate in the federal nutrition programs – SNAP WIC and SFMNP. It is through CFA's parallel Double Dollars program that CFA is best able to capture impact data for FMPP.

Entering into the FMPP grant period six markets, representing 97 farmers from 22 counties, including farmers from 6 of the 8 Promise Zone Counties, from small Appalachian counties were participating in CFA's FMSP. By the end of 2016 25 farmers market from across Kentucky were participating in the Double Dollars program, representing 775 farmers from 81 counties, including the entire Strike Force counties. For the eight markets who participated in the program during 2014 and 2015 their average increase in SNAP/WIC/SFMNP sales was 167%. The Winchester-Clark Co. Farmers Market saw a 576% increase in these sales. (Total sales for 2016 are still being compiled)

A prime example of the success of these efforts is the Whitesburg-Letcher Co. Farmers market with a population of 23,619 and an unemployment rate of 9.2% (Apr 2015) and where over 50% of the population receives some form of federal nutritional assistance. In 2013 the Market had six farmer-vendors and annual sales of \$6,000. In 2016 the Market had 27 vendors and over \$110,000 in sales with 28% of sales derived from SNAP/WIC/SFMNP and Double Dollars. An additional 40% of sales can from a veggie Rx program (Farmacy) partially funded through a USDA FINI pilot.

How important and what is the impact from this increased access to fresh fruits and vegetables? Based on 2015 customer surveys, 64% of customers said that the Double Dollars incentives were extremely or very important to shopping at the farmers market. 68% of people surveyed said they eat a lot more fruits and vegetables and 71% feel more educated about nutrition and healthy eating.

"As a farmer, I see the benefit of promoting program benefits like WIC, Senior Nutrition, and SNAP at farmers markets. Not only does this ensure that those funds are building the local economy, but we see a benefit for our customers. From opening day at Community Farmers Market we saw a need to implement these programs and make them accessible to our customers. The Double Dollar program helps us overcome price differences and the convenience of processed foods."

Nathan Howell, Farmer, Community Farmers Market, Bowling Green KY

"As the father of three young children, I love that I can bring my kids out to experience the farmers' market and let them meet the people who produce their food. Now, they look forward to coming to the market and getting to pick out their produce and interact with everybody. And because they picked it out, they are more likely to eat it once we get home."

J. Caudill, WIC Participant, Magoffin Co.

Lessons Learned:

"Discuss the lessons that were learned from completing the project. Lessons learned may have influenced the direction of the project, helped improve the process, and/or optimized the results. Sharing these experiences may be quite helpful to those seeking to learn from your experiences and to achieve similar results.

Two significant lessons or factors have attributed to the continued success of the project: 1) collaboration and 2) creating and adapting the program based upon the input from the ultimate beneficiaries – in this case the farmers and their customers, especially SNAP/WIC/SFMNP participants.

No single organization or agency can provide the all the resources or possess the variety of experience needed. Though challenging at times, collaboration brings “to the table” resources, ideas and connections often overlooked or unimagined. While it may be assumed, it must be clear that collaboration is about positive relationship building. Coupled with clear intentions and defined outcomes, consistent communication is the cornerstone of successful collaboration. For this project, the collaboration has been multi-layered; markets collaborating with local government, churches, health departments and non-profits; markets cooperating with each other to share experiences; and larger statewide/regional collaboration to combine resources, address policies and create systematic change. A significant role of Community Farm Alliance in the project has been to help facilitate and cultivate these collaborations at all levels, a role that CFA has been fulfilling for over thirty years.

As a grassroots membership organization, CFA is founded on the principle that people and communities know their problems and often know what the potential solutions. CFA has developed programs and policies based on the grassroots voice. From surveys of existing farmers markets CFA create the Farmers Market Support Program (FMSP) in 2014 as a pilot project for six farmers markets that represent a minimum of 5 Kentucky farmers, market Kentucky produced farm products from no more than 50 miles. Over the past three years CFA has relied upon the markets, their farmers and their customers to provide the direction, direct input, and evaluation to continue to adapt the FMSP to address their needs by bringing together collaborative resources and support.

Report any specific and significant IMPACT (newsworthy and/or unexpected and positive) items that AMS can highlight in success stories.

There have been many significant and unexpected impacts resulting from CFA’s FMPP funding, not the least of which has been the number of farmers markets recognizing the value of the program, but two results stand out.

Summer Feeding Program

In 2014 CFA helped the Whitesburg-Letcher Co. Farmers Market become, according to the USDA, the third farmers market in the nation to become a Summer Feeding Program site. The Letcher Co. Farmers Market began serving children fresh local meals in June feeding between 20 – 30 children each week items such as fresh eggs and fruit smoothies from local farmers. July 30, the final day of the SFP, the market served 73 children. The program was so successful that Mountain Comprehensive Care stepped up to continue providing children the free meals through the end of the market season in October. Over the five months of the program the Letcher Co. market provided free meals to 487 children.

In 2015 the Letcher County Farmers Market SFP was expanded to include Tuesdays and served over 1,000 meals to Letcher County children.

In 2015, the Farmers’ Market on the Square (Adair County) elected to partner with the Summer Feeding Program. The Market encountered similar logistical challenges that Letcher endured in their 2014 pilot, but were unable to reach a satisfactory collaboration with their school district’s commissary. However, the market stakeholders have seen and acknowledged the definite need and benefit of providing healthy, locally sourced meals for the children of Adair. As a result, their 2016 summer feeding program will continue independent of state infrastructure and support, and children 18 and younger will be able to eat a free, nutritious meal funded by the market and it’s stakeholders.

CFA, the Dept. of Education and the Kentucky Department of Health are now working to establish state policies and procedures to enable farmers markets all across Kentucky to become Summer Feeding Program sites – benefiting both Kentucky’s children and its farmers.

Kentucky Hunger Initiative

In January of 2016 newly elected Kentucky Commissioner of Agriculture James Comer adopted the problem of hunger in Kentucky as a signature issue of his administration under the banner of the Hunger Initiative. Over the spring and summer The Hunger Initiative held ten regional meeting to learn about community ideas and efforts to address the issue. At almost every meeting farmers markets and “Double Dollars” were near the top of the list of ideas and will become a significant long-term strategy for Kentucky.

On August 5, 2016 Commissioner Comer and other led a media event celebrating the role of farmers markets in addressing food security, better nutrition and in local economies. Governor Mathew Bevin issued a Proclamation declaring August 7-13 Kentucky Farmers Market Week. Additionally the Governor’s office of Agricultural Policy and the Kentucky Agriculture Development Board awarded CFA and grant of \$78,000 to support the Double Dollars and Market Manager Programs in 2016 and a pledge to consider additional funding for 2017-2018.