

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>	April 30, 2016 – September 30, 2016
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Recipient Organization Name:	Goodwill Industries of Northern Michigan
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Meat Cutter Training: Feasibility Study
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	15-LFPP-MI-0006
Year Grant was Awarded:	2015
Project City/State:	Traverse City, Michigan
Total Awarded Budget:	20,000.00

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: _____; Email: _____; Phone: _____

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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: Develop criteria for a meat cutting training program.

- a. Progress Made:

Goodwill conducted an environmental scan of programs that exist nationally for meat processing, which was limited. It was clear that there are very few programs that are utilizing formal curricula in providing training for individuals and employees. While there were several programs offered through educational institutions, they varied widely by state and content. On the employer’s side, most of the evidence points to individualized on the job trainings in this space. In speaking with 20 businesses with meat processing components (grocers, slaughterhouses, meat markets, etc), it is clear that there is no one credential or training program for their operations. Most reported on-site training as their means to bring employees up to speed with regard to their production. Several noted that customer service training is critical to their overall success.

Goodwill has developed a meat cutting training program to include:

- ServSafe Safe Food Handler Training
- HACCP Training – Risk Factors in Working with Animal Proteins
- Knife and Equipment Skills and Safety
- Deer Processing 101 – MI Sportsman
- Venison Production – On the Job Training Experience

ServSafe Safe Food Handler – Goodwill currently provides this level of training for individuals entering its Fruit and Vegetable freezing operation. This is a basic level of education that provides background on risk factors, and departs understanding of how to manage the flow of food in a safe way. This is not a Manager level training – but rather a baseline of knowledge that can be applied in a variety of circumstances. It has been found to offer concrete examples and open up opportunity for dialogue on WHY food safety is important, as well as how to prevent food borne illness. This will provide background to the world of food, on which processing training can build.

HACCP Training – There are risk factors associated with the processing of proteins that are specific, and paramount to providing safe and delicious products. Throughout their planning, Goodwill has constructed a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point audit and plan in working with venison products. At each control point, critical limits have been set, and training will ensure that

this procedure is followed, but as importantly, share why the limit and control point are important to overall food safety.

Knife and Equipment Skills and Safety – Many individuals that have been out of the workforce or those looking to change into a career in meat cutting will require a significant amount of training in using a knife. The most important, and dangerous tool in any butchering capacity, knives are kept razor sharp and most move quickly in the hands of a skilled individual. For trainees, developing knife skills will be important for their long term success in the field. A basic look at knives most often used will be shared with trainees. Most importantly, Goodwill will provide an opportunity for practice in using these tools safely. Trainees will be monitored and expected to move slowly at first, then as core skills with a knife improve, so too will the opportunity for speed. First we get good – Then we get fast is the strategy that this segment will take.

Deer Processing 101 – Processing venison provides a great entry point for individuals seeking to enter the meat cutting industry. The bulk of everything on a harvested deer is ground into burger, so there is little opportunity to ruin an expensive cut. That said, the work is not easy, especially if it's an individual's first time. This segment of training will be adopted from the *Michigan Sportsman's Deer* processing 101 presentation. This presentation is a detailed breakdown of each of the steps in venison processing. Trainees will see this first on a presentation screen, which should help limit the shock factor individuals experience when they witness the carcass in real life. Two game wardens have volunteered to teach this portion of the curriculum.

Venison Production – This is the hands on component of training, where trainees will work directly with the venison to break it down into one pound packages of hamburger. The best way for many of our trainees to learn is by doing; therefore, this segment of training will be the most valuable. Having gone through the other training modules, trainees will be ready and tooled up with the skills they need to be successful and safe in this process. Of course, skilled trainers will be on site to address questions and provide coaching in real time throughout this experience.

b. Impact on Community:

As farmers fill crop protection permits, and hunters begin to fill tags, Goodwill will provide a free, licensed venison processing opportunity, while also providing a space for on-the-job training for individuals interested in learning about meat cutting.

On the whole, there is interest a training program that could provide candidates for open positions, which most noted was difficult or very difficult to fill. While some reported that people tended to stay in these positions for longer periods of time, seven businesses were actively seeking meat cutters at the time of the interview. Pay was found to average between \$12 and \$15 per hour for these positions, with some operations paying as much as \$20 per hour for skilled and experienced workers.

ii. Goal/Objective 2: Establish licensing (Health Department, MDA, USDA) and process requirements at each level in the food chain.

a. Progress Made:

Goodwill has been able to work closely with Michigan Department of Agriculture, with their help we have created an understanding of licensing requirements for both donated and purchased protein from non-amenable species. We have an opportunity to utilize a Michigan Department of Agriculture licensed slaughterhouse in Traverse City to address this unique gap and opportunity. The slaughterhouse is used two months out of the year to process buffalo and sits idle the other 10 months. Though a coordinated training program, Goodwill believes it can provide the market with trained meat cutters, while also providing feeding programs with an appropriately licensed processing option.

b. Impact on Community:

Leveraging underutilized infrastructure means low expense in creating additional training and employment opportunities for the area. Also farmers will find a market for deer hunted on block crop protection permits. As well as, Hog and Beef farmers gaining access to additional processing opportunities regionally.

iii. Goal/Objective 3: Develop marketing materials to garner livestock and venison donations for use in community feeding initiatives.

a. Progress Made:

Goodwill worked though Brand Tonic, a local marketing firm, to develop outreach materials for farmers and hunters interested in donating venison products these materials will be distributed to community agencies, locations selling hunting permits, and in the case of farmers, mailed directly to their homes. The marketing materials consisted of a 11x17 poster, a double sided rack card and direct mail post card. Content was also created and posted to the Goodwill Northern Michigan website and digital advertising content for social media.

b. Impact on Community:

The goal was twofold; to create public awareness for Goodwill Northern Michigan's mission to strengthen the community by assisting access to job training and healthy food options through our local food pantries. And secondly

to target our local farmers and hunters about the program and the opportunity and donate and help our neighbors in need.

iv. Goal/Objective 4: Conduct market analysis for locally sourced value added meat products, including pork, venison and beef.

a. Progress Made:

Goodwill contracted with Taste the Local Difference to develop and execute a study of farmers to better understand their experience with nuisance deer, and interest in participating with this program. 48 respondents from nine counties in the Northwest Michigan Region responded to the survey. Of those, 32 percent used Deer Damage Permits, and 32 percent used Deer Management permits in their operations. There is a growing need among the food pantry network for such a space to process venison individuals wish to donate to their feeding initiatives. At the same time, the Northern Michigan market has demand for trained meat cutters to serve the growing food economy. Goodwill has secured a licensed processing space to fill these gaps simultaneously.

Over half of those that harvest deer chose to give it away to a neighbor or family in need (52.94%). On the low end, 4 respondents reported harvesting between 1 and 5 deer a year. On the high end, two respondents reported harvesting over 20 deer per year. A majority (61.54%) reported that they would be interested in providing this protein to Food Rescue for processing and distribution and nearly 70% said they would be willing to have Food Rescue bring its refrigerated infrastructure on farm to manage the pickup of donated animals. In addition to surveying farmers, 15 respondents represented grocery stores or restaurants, to gauge their interest and experience in using venison products. Of these 15 business owners, 40% report offering venison as part of their protein offerings, while the majority (60%) do not. Issues with proper equipment and product sourcing were mentioned among responses as to barriers in introducing venison products.

b. Impact on Community:

The market analysis highlighted the need for such a project and the need for trained meat cutters in the area. This gave the opportunity to connect farmers as well as retailers to establish baseline of opportunity in niche market meat processing. In the analysis it was found that there is an abundance of venison in region, but to have it processed by for a business by an outside processor is more expensive than if done in the name of an individual. Though the processing of other livestock is an easy addition to training, it also requires additional licensing.

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: N/A
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: N/A
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: N/A
 - iv. Number of markets expanded: N/A
 - v. Number of new markets established: N/A
 - vi. Market sales increased by \$0 and increased by 0%.
 - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: N/A
 - a. Percent Increase: N/A
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?
N/A
4. Discuss your community partnerships.
- i. Who are your community partners?
 - a. Taste the Local Difference
 - b. Michigan Farm Bureau
 - c. Brand Tonic
 - d. Oleson Food Stores
 - ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project?

Each partner has provided support in the development of curricula and strategy for the implementation of a training program. Taste the Local Difference is underway with a marketing study, Oleson Food Stores has committed their facility and equipment, Brand Tonic has started to develop the marketing campaign for farmers.
 - iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this LFPP grant?

These partners are critical in the effort moving forward, particularly in helping market the opportunity to regional growers shooting deer on crop protection. Spreading word and highlighting the opportunities for animals shot under these kinds of permits, not allowing for good food to go to waste.
5. Did you use contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project? N/A
6. Have you publicized any results yet?* N/A
- i. If yes, how did you publicize the results?
 - ii. To whom did you publicize the results?
 - iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach?
- *Send any publicity information (brochures, announcements, newsletters, etc.) electronically along with this report. Non-electronic promotional items should be digitally photographed and emailed with this report (do not send the actual item).

7. Have you collected any feedback from your community and additional stakeholders about your work?
- i. If so, how did you collect the information?
Feedback was collected in the survey conducted by Taste the Local Difference as well as phone and in person surveys.
8. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?
- Venison from many suppliers can be difficult to source or you can only manage to get a small amount.
 - Limited availability for the product and current demand is also limited.
 - Unfamiliar with venison suppliers and the seasonal customer base is not familiar with the product.
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:
 - ii. Did the project generate any income?
 - a. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award?
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).

This was Goodwill's first effort in conducting a market analysis study and marketing plan for a food based training program. Coordinated conversations with stakeholders were incredibly valuable in two ways.

1. Understanding the opportunity for trained individuals to enter the workforce
2. Understanding the opportunity for harvest of nuisance animals on farm. It was unclear going in to this study if the need for processing of nuisance deer was a 5 animal issue, or a 500 animal issue. It has become clearer that the opportunity is between 20 and 40 animals per year, which makes this a great opportunity for training.

In interviews and research with Michigan Department of Agriculture Sanitarians, as well as USDA meat and dairy inspector, it became clear that the barriers that exist for processing amenable species (cow, pig, goats, sheep) are significant.

Michigan Department of Agriculture monitors locally facilities that process non-amenable species, like deer, elk, buffalo and bear. Once the program were to enter into the space of processing an amenable species (cow, pig, etc.) the regulatory authority changes to federal. The facility must be adequately resourced to provide offices and a shower for a USDA inspector, who would be on site throughout the entire process. While this doesn't present a barrier in the space (the identified slaughterhouse is set up per federal specifications) it does create the following barriers in programming:

1. The federal plan review requires a significant amount of information related to the processes (what types of products) and volumes of items anticipated for processing. Because this project is so new, little concrete data exists in the cuts required to meet market opportunity.
2. A federal inspector must be onsite throughout the entirety of the process, with schedules set well in advance. Again, the newness of this project makes it unrealistic to set up such a schedule without purchase orders.
3. From a technical capacity standpoint, trainees will lack skill necessary for more complicated and expensive cuts. This stands to create a bottleneck in processing, and would result in substantial idle time for an inspector on the floor. Venison, on the other hand, creates an easy entry point, as there would be very few prime cuts, with most all product being ground.

For the above reasons, Goodwill is recommending that the entry point for a pilot initiative be in venison processing exclusively, which is possible entirely through local regulators. This creates an environment where trainees and the program are set up for success. Then, as the initiative proves concept, it begin to move toward processing amenable species as the program grows in capacity.

11. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving: N/A

- ii. Describe any lessons learned in the administration of the project that might be helpful for others who would want to implement a similar project:

Working with well positioned partners was incredibly important. Taste the Local Difference has access to means of study and research that would have been incredibly expensive to re-create. The relationships we were able to leverage made the capture and analysis of information much easier than anything we could have done individually.

12. 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.

This study has laid the groundwork for a training program that will provide not only valuable resources to the community in terms of meat processing, but will move individuals forward that are seeking new skills development. When we started this project, it was unknown what the labor market looked like in this area, and what the nuisance deer issue looks like on farm; but through research and outreach, we have come to conclusions that are promising for future development in this area, and uncovered a clear gap in the food system, and means to fill it. It is estimated that moving forward, we will be able to provide from two to four training slots per year, where individuals will learn about meat cutting, HAACP plans and receive on the job training that will give them a leg up in a position that pays a living wage. Year after year, this program would create employment opportunities in the way of trained meat cutters, a benefit in future jobs created that is unprecedented to anything the meat industry in our community has seen before.

- 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?

Additional research could be done on value added meat products that could be created using similar infrastructure (licensed slaughterhouse). It seems emerging markets are presenting themselves in bone broth, locally rendered lard, and packaged meals that would all require a facility with a USDA inspector on site. A market analysis of the opportunity that exists in these areas would quantify the opportunity, and further move the local food economy forward.