

## 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](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, 2014 – September 29, 2016
<b>Authorized Representative Name:</b>	Dr. Oran B. Hesterman
<b>Authorized Representative Phone:</b>	734-213-3999 x 201
<b>Authorized Representative Email:</b>	ohesterman@fairfoodnetwork.org
<b>Recipient Organization Name:</b>	Fair Food Network
<b>Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:</b>	Fair Food Consulting Corps: Technical Assistance to Support the Development of Regionally Scaled Food System Infrastructure
<b>Grant Agreement Number:</b> <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-LFPPX-MI-0092
<b>Year Grant was Awarded:</b>	2014
<b>Project City/State:</b>	Cambridge, MA
<b>Total Awarded Budget:</b>	\$100,000 in LFPP funding + \$33,500 in non-federal matching funds

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: Alex Linkow; Email: [alinkow@fairfoodnetwork.org](mailto:alinkow@fairfoodnetwork.org); Phone: 734-730-3558

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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: Accelerate development of the enterprises needed to help the region’s small and mid-scale farms access new markets, develop new products, and reach scale
  - a. Progress Made: With funding from this grant, Fair Food Network has supported business assistance projects for 17 local food enterprises. The table below lists the enterprise, how they assist the region’s small and mid-size farms, and the type of assistance that the Fair Food Consulting Corps program provided:

**Good Food Enterprises Supported through LFPP Grant to Fair Food Network’s Consulting Corps Program**

Enterprise	Enterprise Description/Farmer Impact	Services Provided
<b>Al Fresh Co, MA</b> <a href="http://www.alfreshco.com">www.alfreshco.com</a>	Al Fresh Co is a meal kit business focused on using locally grown produce. They create a new market for local growers and deliver by bicycle to urban communities in metro Boston.	Marketing strategy and market research to support growth
<b>ARC Farm (Agrarian Resource Collaborative), ME</b>	ARC Farm is developing a farm model featuring small and mid-size four-season farms organized around central processing, creating new farmer opportunities, and increasing the supply of year-round local, sustainably grown produce for wholesale and retail sales in Maine.	Financial modelling to support business plan development
<b>Brookford Farm, NH</b> <a href="http://www.brookfordfarm.com">www.brookfordfarm.com</a>	Brookford Farm is a 600-acre diversified farm in NH producing milk, yogurt, cheeses, meat (pork, beef, and poultry) and organically certified vegetables.	Lean manufacturing / process improvements
<b>Cellars at Jasper Hill, VT</b> <a href="http://www.jasperhillfarm.com/cellars/">www.jasperhillfarm.com/cellars/</a>	The Cellars at Jasper Hill ripens cheese made by Jasper Hill Creameries as well as those made by other producers from milk produced in Vermont. They expand market opportunities for Vermont dairies.	Long term strategic planning and capital raising strategy
<b>Commonwealth Poultry, ME</b> <a href="http://www.commonwealthpoultry.com">www.commonwealthpoultry.com</a>	Commonwealth Poultry Co. provides New England with fresh, air-chilled, all-natural, growth hormone free poultry. They are Maine's only USDA inspected poultry processor. They purchase birds from ME and PA growers, creating a sales channel for these farmers.	Accounting, financial management, and competitive analysis to drive profitable decision making
<b>Farm Bridge, RI</b> <a href="http://www.farm2tablecopackers.com">www.farm2tablecopackers.com</a>	Farm Bridge processes and packs products for value-added food and agriculture businesses in and around New York’s Hudson Valley. Farm Bridge creates year-round markets for the region’s farms and food entrepreneurs.	Strategy, growth plan, investor pitch materials to enable raising growth capital
<b>Fresh Food Generation, MA</b> <a href="http://www.freshfoodgeneration.org">www.freshfoodgeneration.org</a>	Fresh Food Generation is a farm-to-plate food truck and catering business. Their mission is to improve access to healthy food. They purchase from local farms and focus on underserved communities.	Cost accounting and financial reporting system development

<b>Herbal Revolution Farm and Apothecary, ME</b> www.herbalrevolutionmaine.com	Herbal Revolution produces tonics, shrubs, elixirs, and teas from farmed wild gathered herbs. They create market opportunities for farmers and raise awareness of the Grown in Maine label.	Marketing strategy and design of marketing collateral
<b>Kriemhild Dairy Farms, NY</b> www.kriemhilddairy.com	Kriemhild Dairy produces premium butter and crème fraiche from grass fed cows. They purchase from area farms, and create a premium market for grass-fed dairy producers.	Cost accounting and financial model development to prepare for fundraising
<b>Maine Crisp Company, ME</b> facebook.com/ themainecrispcompany	Maine Crisp company produces gluten-free crackers using ingredients purchased from five Maine farms, providing a new sales channel for the producers.	Design of packaging and design of specialized production equipment
<b>Myers Produce, VT and MA</b> www.myersproduce.com	Myers Produce aggregates produce from local farms in Northern VT and Western MA and distributes to restaurants and retailers in NYC, creating new markets for these producers.	Executive coaching, including strategy and business planning for growth
<b>Pippin Foods, NY</b> http://www.pippinfoods.com/	Pippin Foods is creating a brand of local produce aggregated from multiple farms via traditional "packing houses" but source identified and sold under the Pippin label. The business aims to enable small and mid-size fresh produce growers to access large scale retail outlets.	Distribution strategy to access large scale retailers; social media strategy
<b>Radicle Farm Company, NJ</b> www.radfarm.co	Radicle Farm Co. grows salad greens for restaurants, grocers, and distributors in the northeast US.	Financial modelling
<b>Sea to Table, various</b> www.sea2table.com	Sea to Table partners with independent fishermen and commercial docks in 44 traditional fishing communities from Alaska to Maine and ships to over 1,000 chefs at restaurants and institutions in 46 states. They source only wild, domestic seafood that is sustainably harvested and traceable to the point of landing.	Design of inventory accounting system; five-year financial projections
<b>The Pickup, ME</b> www.thepickupcsa.com	The Pickup is a multi-farm community supported agriculture business in Skowhegan, Maine, providing an efficient sales outlet for local producers.	Logistics and distribution optimization
<b>Thirty Acre Farm, ME</b> www.thirtyacrefarm.com	Thirty Acre Farm produces fermented foods from Maine-grown products; their value-added products create a year-round market for Maine grown vegetables.	Distribution and sales strategy
<b>Urban Farm Fermentory, ME</b> www.urbanfarmfermentory.com	Urban Farm Fermentory produces and sells kombucha, hard cider, gruit, and mead in Portland, Maine and operates a tasting room onsite. They forage local specialty ingredients and purchase ingredients from local Maine farms and orchards.	Financial management (e.g., budgeting, cash flow management, and reporting)

*b. Impact on Community:* This business assistance funding strengthens the entrepreneurial capacity of these enterprises, accelerating their ability to enhance small and mid-size farm viability in the Northeastern United States. As the table above shows, these enterprises are helping these farms access new markets, increase sales, and improve margins. As these entrepreneurial enterprises grow, they will increasingly support the agricultural economy and

provide new job opportunities. Our surveys of supported entrepreneurs indicate that they support the viability of 279 farms in the Northeast and purchased over \$8 million of local produce and dairy, as well as a significant amount of locally sourced fish during the year in which they received Consulting Corps support using LFPP funding.

*ii. Goal/Objective 2: Improve access to local food for communities of all means*

*a. Progress Made:* We surveyed the 17 enterprises that we supported. They reported that they purchased over \$8 million of local food in the past year alone. The communities served by these enterprises vary widely, ranging from rural Maine to urban Boston.

*b. Impact on Community:* More food purchased and distributed locally translates to more revenue in local farmers' pockets and more local food on consumers' plates. Through our survey, the entrepreneurs that participated in Consulting Corps projects funded through the LFPP grant supported 279 small and mid-size farms in the Northeast.

*iii. Goal/Objective 3: Create jobs as the enterprises grow*

*a. Progress Made:* There is generally a gap between the time an enterprise receives business assistance and the time that enterprise implements growth plans and creates new jobs. Through our survey, we asked participating enterprises how many employees they had on staff one year ago and at the time of the survey (October 2016). These enterprises, with support from the LFPP grant and the Fair Food Consulting Corps program, reported adding 59 jobs in the year during which they participated in the program.

*b. Impact on Community:* These additional jobs are beginning to fuel economic development in communities around the Northeastern United States.

*iv. Goal/Objective 4: Prepare enterprises for growth financing from Fair Food Fund and others*

*a. Progress Made:* Of the 17 enterprises that participated in Consulting Corps projects funded through the LFPP grant, two have also received financing from the Fair Food Fund (Urban Farm Fermentory and Radicle Farm Company), and one additional enterprise has applied and is currently being considered for financing. We anticipate receiving financing applications from two or more additional participating enterprises in the next 6-9 months as well.

*b. Impact on Community:* Growth financing for these good food enterprises allows them to scale operations, buy more food from local farms, add jobs, and supply more local food to communities throughout the Northeast.

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, 2014). Include further explanation if necessary.*
  - i. *Number of direct jobs created:* 0 (This program is designed to support job creation at the enterprises we support, not FFN.)
  - ii. *Number of jobs retained:* 149 (This is the number of jobs at enterprises we supported that existed at start of project.)
  - iii. *Number of indirect jobs created:* 59 (These are full time jobs created during the year in which FFN provided business assistance.)
  - iv. *Number of markets expanded:* 15 (All the enterprises we supported are expanding markets for farmers or fishermen except two, which are still too early stage.)
  - v. *Number of new markets established:* 2 (One of the businesses we supported is a new venture, creating a new sales opportunity for farmers. The other new venture is seeking to create opportunities to farm as well as supporting those farmers in getting their products to market.)
  - vi. *Market sales increase:* Market sales increased by over \$8.9 million and increased by 33%. (This number represents year over year increase in sales by the companies that received Consulting Corps business assistance with support from the LFPP grant. It reflects sales of fish, butter, vegetables, pickles, and more. We compare sales at the beginning of the year in which assistance was received to the year following assistance. In some cases, the following year is a projection.)
  - vii. *Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project:* 279 (Note that this is the sum of farmers supported by the businesses we worked with through the LFPP grant. We are unable to correct for the possibility of double-counting in the event that a particular farm was counted by more than one participating enterprise.)
    - a. *Percent Increase:* N/A (we do not collect time series data on number of farmers supported).
  
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?* This grant allowed Fair Food Fund to support 17 enterprises with funding for business assistance. Two of the businesses were new ventures; the rest are in the early stages of growth. In all cases, the LFPP grant strengthened the growth potential of these enterprises so that they can support the viability of more farmers or fishermen, typically through purchasing more local food. Several of the supported enterprises are increasing local food access for underserved populations as well.
  
4. *Discuss your community partnerships.*
  - i. *Who are your community partners?* Our collaborators include Slow Money Maine, CEI, The Carrot Project, Franklin County CDC, PV Grows, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, New Hampshire Community Loan Fund, and Common Capital.
  - ii. *How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project?* The Fair Food Consulting Corps program is a collaborative endeavor in which FFN works with other organizations in various geographies. Our collaborators frequently help Fair Food Network identify and screen the enterprises that receive Consulting Corps funding and often assist in identifying appropriate consultants.
  - iii. *How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this LFPP grant?* Fair Food Network will continue to work with Fair Food Consulting Corps program collaborators to help us source, evaluate, and fund

projects and to link entrepreneurs with the appropriate consultants.

5. *Did you use contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project?* Fair Food Network contracts with consultants who deliver the one-to-one business assistance to the selected good food enterprises. We screen these consultants to ensure that they have the required skills and will be a good style fit for selected entrepreneurs. Over the course of the LFPP grant period, Fair Food Network has been able to expand our consulting network, which continues to strengthen our ability to serve enterprises with targeted 1:1 business assistance.
6. *Have you publicized any results yet?\** We have produced and published to our website profiles of five enterprises which we supported through the Consulting Corps program with support from the LFPP grant. We plan to publicize these profiles via social media in the first quarter of 2017. Below, please find links to the published profiles:

[The Pickup](#)

[Urban Farm Fermentory](#)

[Fresh Food Generation](#)

[Brookford Farm](#)

[Kriemhild Dairy Farms](#)

In addition, the results of this grant will be included in the Fair Food Fund 2016 Annual Report, which highlights the food system impacts we and our participating enterprises have achieved over the past year. This report is sent to our funders, partners, and other stakeholders.

- i. *If yes, how did you publicize the results?* We will publicize entrepreneur profiles and the Fair Food Fund Annual Report via social media and e-newsletter. We will also share the Fair Food Fund Annual Report directly with funders, partners, and other stakeholders. In addition, we will post both the entrepreneur profiles and the Fair Food Fund Annual Report to the Fair Food Network website.
- ii. *To whom did you publicize the results?* We will share the entrepreneur profiles and the Fair Food Fund Annual Report with FFN social media followers, e-newsletter readers, and Fair Food Network web site visitors. We will also share the Fair Food Fund Annual Report with funders, partners, and other stakeholders.
- iii. *How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach?* We will reach a potential 11,500+ Facebook fans, nearly 19,000 Twitter followers, and 5,000+ visitors per month to FairFoodNetwork.org. In addition, we'll reach 11,000+ subscribers via e-blast.

*\*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 administer an annual survey of all participants in the Fair Food Fund's programs, including the Consulting Corps. For this report, we isolated survey response data from LFPP-funded enterprises.

ii. *What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?* Not every survey respondent provided comments. All the comments that we have permission to share are listed here:

- “The technical assistance we received, even though a small number compared to our overall revenue, still has a very positive impact for us. Besides helping us to pay for these services it enables us to also focus on what we needed done and helps us complete that task.”
- “This was a really wonderful program, and incredibly useful to our growing business! Without the support of Fair Food Fund, we would not be as prepared to launch our product as we are today. Thank you.”
- “Fair Food Network provided critical grant assistance when the business needed it to solve 2 fundamental problems that were limiting growth. This assistance gave us the confidence to move the business into commercial space and will enable expansion of sales and hiring of staff.”
- “Thank you for your support to the New England, Mid-Atlantic and US fishing communities.”
- “A great organization helping farmers and food producers navigate a market place that is full of obstacles and challenges.”
- “This is a great program that has had a very positive impact on our business.”

8. *Budget Summary:*

- 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:*
- Did the project generate any income? No*
  - If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award?*

9. *Lessons Learned:*

- 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).* Having a grant of this size and scope was extremely beneficial to our work. As a regional program, LFPP provided us the flexibility we need to work across state lines to grow a vibrant regional food system. Throughout the project period, we became more efficient in screening applicants, reviewing applications, and managing contracts. We also learned that, oftentimes, entrepreneurs require significant upfront coaching to determine the most timely and effective use of consulting services. This coaching, as well as ongoing project management, has required a significant investment of Fair Food Network staff time. The Consulting Corps program team is now in the process of developing a framework for identifying the capabilities and capability gaps of entrepreneurs during the project screening process, which will

help us further improve our ability to target consulting resources efficiently and effectively moving forward.

- 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:* In addition to allocating sufficient staff time and resources to allow for up front assessment and coaching of entrepreneurs, it is essential to cultivate a strong pipeline of entrepreneurs because it can be difficult to manage the timing of project start and completion. Food system entrepreneurs have many priorities to manage, and sometimes unexpected events alter these priorities. We needed to allocate additional staff time to program management toward the end of the grant period to ensure that projects were managed in accordance with the grant deadline.

#### 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.* The LFPP grant allowed Fair Food Network to support 17 good food enterprises across the Northeastern US. Fair Food Network's Consulting Corps continues to support good food enterprises across the region following the completion of the LFPP grant. With the business assistance that was funded by LFPP, these enterprises are growing, maintaining and adding jobs, increasing local food access, expanding and opening new markets for local food, supporting the financial viability of an increasing number of small and mid-size farms, and building a vibrant regional food system.
- 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?* While this project has been very effective, food system entrepreneurs still need a great deal of business assistance as they seek to advance the creation of a thriving local and regional food system. We are exploring two program initiatives as we move forward:

##### 1. **Expand Consulting Corps Program and Networks Regionally**

To date, our networks of consultants, collaborators, funders, and entrepreneurs are strongest in northern New England, particularly in Maine. We believe that there is an opportunity to expand our networks and grow the reach of the Consulting Corps program in southern New England, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Program expansion would require additional funding and increased staff capacity, but the result would be providing more entrepreneurs across a broader geography access to the coaching and consulting services they need to support their growth and positive food system impacts.

##### 2. **Expand the Fair Food Business Boot Camp Program**

The Fair Food Business Boot Camp is a three-day intensive program that gives high-potential food system entrepreneurs the skills that they need to grow their enterprises. We successfully delivered our fourth annual Boot Camp outside

Boston, MA in December 2016. Historically, we accept five enterprises each year to the Boot Camp. However, FFN is considering expanding this program to serve up to ten enterprises annually, to expand our impact while achieving economies of scale. In 2017, we plan to seek grant funding to a) adjust the curriculum to serve a larger audience and b) fund program delivery (instructors, room and board for entrepreneurs, etc.). Expanding the Boot Camp program is a cost-effective opportunity to support the growth of good food businesses and their essential role in building a vibrant and sustainable regional food system.