

The final performance report summarizes the outcome of your FMPP award objectives. As stated in the FMPP Terms and Conditions, you will not be eligible for future FMPP or Local Food 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 FMPP 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 FMPP staff to avoid delays:

FMPP Phone: 202-690-4152; Email: USDAFMPPQuestions@ams.usda.gov; Fax: 202-690-4152

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

Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	<i>September 30, 2014-September 29, 2016</i>
Authorized Representative Name:	Kathy Zeman
Authorized Representative Phone:	(320) 250-5087
Authorized Representative Email:	kzeman@mfma.org
Recipient Organization Name:	Minnesota Farmers' Market Association
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Developing Sustainable Farmers' Markets in Minnesota
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	<i>14-FMPPX-MN-0091</i>
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Nerstrand MN
Total Awarded Budget:	\$61,496

FMPP 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: _____

1. State the goals/objectives of your project as outlined in the grant narrative and/or approved by FMPP 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.

Goals #1 and #2: (1) Develop and provide training for market management to compete more successfully as businesses with other retail food venues. This training will include: location layout and design, vendor product mix and location, overall look of the market, advertising themes and budgets, etc. **(2) Develop and provide training for vendors** to professionalize their farmers' market experience: displays, customer relations, regulations, interacting with customers, recordkeeping, profit margins, blend pricing on products, taxes, food safety, etc.

- a. Progress Made: MFMA's big picture goal with this project was to bring trainings out to the various regions of the state that would help market managers and vendors become more profitable and therefore more sustainable. We accomplished this and so much more!

We held eight 1-day workshops for 548 attendees; completed 78 one-on-one consultations with markets and vendors; gathered pre- and post-training data via several surveys; and videos of the trainings are live on MinnesotaFMA YouTube.

Our initial collaboration with University of Minnesota Extension educators was great and continues beyond the grant. Additionally, peer organizations in the state helped promote and support the trainings; some offering scholarships in a few regions to attendees.

Our most impressive result of this project? Building relationships with so many new (to us) farmers' markets and vendors in the state: we offered trainings but they offered questions and feedback that is helping us build an even stronger farmers' market community in Minnesota.

To assess (benchmark) what our managers and vendors wanted to learn, we surveyed (Survey Monkey) our membership at the beginning of this project. The top four needs for vendors: new food laws, increasing sales, general marketing, food sampling and food demos. The top four for market managers: growing their markets, general marketing, funding for their markets, food sampling and food demos.

Based on this needs assessment, we contracted with two UME educators, Ryan Pesch and Suzanne Driessen, to create workshops to focus on profitability and marketing (Pesch); and cottage foods law, food safety, food sampling (Driessen). MFMA staff and Board members created the material specific to farmers' markets: sponsorships, attracting new vendors and new customers, market layout and design, booth layout and design, etc.

We called our eight 1-day workshops throughout MN the "Farmers' Market Academy." FMAs were held:

- Dec.1, 2015: Minneapolis (105)
- Dec. 15, 2015: McIntosh (46)
- Dec. 16, 2015: Fergus Falls (40)
- Jan. 5, 2016: Little Falls (58)
- Jan. 6, 2016: Cloquet (45)
- Jan. 20, 2016: Redwood Falls (41)

Feb. 9, 2016: Mankato / Lake Crystal (69)

Feb. 10, 2016: Rochester (81)

Additionally, due to Minnesnowta weather, dozens of training packets were snail mailed to registrants who could not attend; with follow-up phone calls to clarify questions.

At each FMA, registrants evaluated the workshops. The sessions taught by Pesch (profitability and marketing) and Driessen (new cottage food laws, food safety, food sampling and demos) rated the highest: ≥ 8 out of 10 consistently.

All materials developed with grant funds can be found linked on our website: www.mfma.org

We accomplished all our goals, under budget.

This was performed by UME (Pesch and Driessen) and MFMA (Bansen-Weigle, Zeman, Davis, Coulter).

b. Impact on Community

Our evaluations indicate both intangible and tangible impacts. The best intangible was the overwhelming appreciation from attendees for bringing the training TO THEM instead of always making them come to one central spot in the state (which meant the majority of our membership <and potential membership> never received the training. The best tangible impact was the feedback from attendees that we accomplished the main training needs AND THEN identified the next layer of training needs.

Goal #3: Perform on-site evaluations of the trained market managers and vendors. MFMA will deploy evaluators to the markets and vendors who received the training and provide them with written and pictorial feedback.

a. Progress Made

Following the conclusion of the successful FMAs, we switched to Phase Two of our grant project: developing an assessment tool that trained consultants used while doing on-site consults with vendors and markets who requested that feedback. The assessment tool included pre-visit researching (do they have a website? Social media accounts? Logo?) as well as a laundry list of items the consultant observed and/or asked questions of the vendor/market manager; including on-site pictures. Once the consult was complete, the consultant prepared a report with their feedback. The report also included an appendix of dozens of templates the vendor/market manager can modify for their use in the years to come. Seventy-eight on-site consults were completed across the state. The actual reports given to the vendors/market managers during the consults are confidential, but the template is available from info@mfma.org.

b. Impact on Community

We won't see the impact of these on-site consults until the 2017 farmers' market season, when the vendors and market managers have an opportunity to put in place the suggested improvements. We've heard back from many of the consultees about changes they'll do – but have not actually seen that happen.

Goal #4: Via pre- and post-training surveys, capture data from the markets/vendors that benchmarks their pre-training status and sales, and measures their post-training status and sales.

a. Progress Made

To assess (benchmark) what our managers and vendors wanted to learn, we surveyed our membership at the beginning of this project. We received 146 benchmark surveys in the beginning to make our needs assessment. The top four needs for vendors: new food laws, increasing sales, general marketing, food sampling and food demos. The top four for market managers: growing their markets, general marketing, funding for their markets, food sampling and food demos. At each workshop, we received over half the participants' evaluations back; 288 total. Those evals we had to input manually into Survey Monkey (lesson learned!) The post evals reflected very favorably on the trainings; attendees received the training they requested and learned from it.

The one piece of data that we failed at was benchmarking sales data; and then tracking any movement in sales due to the training. While it sounded like a good idea to track sales, we would have needed a 6-year grant to make that happen: there wasn't enough time between training and the next farmers' market season to assess any change. Additionally, we quickly realized that even if we had a long enough time between training/sales data collection, there are just too many variables to make that sales data tracking reliable: weather could take out crops; vendors may change product line, ETC.

b. Impact on Community

Evals prove the training was excellent and attendees scored well on lessons learned. HOWEVER, we won't know for sure the lessons were learned until we see change in behavior – again, that won't happen until the next farmers' market season.

Goal #5: Video and package the training program for future use, to extend the benefits of this grant for years.

a. Progress Made

Initially we were going to video one of the FMAs, but those day long sessions, with many questions, were not conducive to a quality teaching video. Therefore, we had Pesch and Driessen re-do their sessions in August in a studio, making for much better training videos. All five videos are available on MinnesotaFMA on YouTube.

b. Impact on Community

We have less than 20 views on the videos so far. However, Minnesota Department of Agriculture is in the processing of approving the food safety ones for "MDA-approved training" for cottage foods, so that will make those videos much more viewed. Additionally, we haven't promoted the profitability videos yet heavily; that will kick-off with our March 21, 2017 Spring Conference.

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 farmers/producers that have benefited from the project:
 - a. Percent Increase: Phenomenal. MFMA went from 270 members to 550 members; our elist went from 756 to now over 1,600.
3. Did you expand your customer base by reaching new populations such as new ethnic groups, additional low income/low access populations, new businesses, etc.? If so, how? Yes. All the new members are new cottage

food producers.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.
 - i. Who are your community partners? University of Minnesota Extension, University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, Minnesota Institute of Sustainable Agriculture, Renewing the Countryside.
 - ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the FMPP project? UME developed the training. UM RSDPs contributed travel scholarships. All 4 helped us promote the FMAs and helped line up locations.
 - iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMPP grant? In Minnesota we are fortunate that we collaborate quite effectively with all peer organizations. These community partners, as well as several others, are all working with MFMA (and we / them) to program together on the next level of requested training form our markets and vendors.

5. Did you use contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the FMPP project? We contracted with two University of Minnesota Extension Educators, Ryan Pesch and Suzanne Driessen, to create workshops to focus on profitability and marketing (Pesch) and cottage foods law, food safety, food sampling (Driessen). Their material is available as downloads on our website and as videos on our YouTube page. www.mfma.org and MinnesotaFMA on YouTube.

6. Have you publicized any results yet?*.
 - i. and ii. How did you publicize the results? To whom did you publicize the results?
A handout and presentation will be given on March 21, 2017 at our MFMA Spring Conference and Annual Meeting to our membership; and on April 13, 2017 to our MN LFAC (Minnesota Local Foods Advisory Committee); the statewide committee that addresses all local foods issues in MN. Following that, our report will be downloadable from our website. www.mfma.org
 - iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach?
MFMA Spring Conference: ~200 attendees; MN LFAC: ~ 67 attendees, representing over 40 organizations in MN.

*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?
 - ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?
We have a continual feedback loop with our community partners on all our programming. As part of our statewide LFAC (Local Food Advisory Committee), which meets quarterly, we've received positive feedback on the entire FMPP 2014 grant. Additionally, we have been invited to collaborate on many more projects because of our programming success.

8. Budget Summary:
 - i. As part of the FMPP 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?

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).
- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:
- iii. Describe any lessons learned in the administration of the project that might be helpful for others who would want to implement a similar project:

This project was more successful than we imagined...thus creating more work than we planned on. It took more time to analyze the results of our surveys and evals than we budgeted.

We were much too broad in what we wanted to teach vs. how much time was allotted in a 1-day workshop. After our first workshop, we pared the topics to the main four, to reduce the frustration of both presenters and participants.

We allowed our on-site consultants to take more time than originally scheduled. That was a pretty dynamic situation: scheduling visits around everyone's availability, the weather, etc.

We failed in getting sales data that proved anything. What we wanted to see was an increase in sales BECAUSE of the trainings; we did not get that. (We should have offered markets and vendors a \$100 stipend to bribe them to gather and share their sales numbers; we did not budget for that.) And there are too many variables that impact sales than we can account for. The best we can say about the sales data we gathered is that it gives us some benchmarks NOW for future use.

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 FMA structure worked; FMA is now a known thing: "Farmers' Markets Academies" for: bringing specific, targeted training out to the people. We already have our fall 2017 FMAs planned, highlighting the next requested trainings: grants, FSMA (Food Safety Modernization Act).

- 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?
MFMA's next step is to secure funding to develop a series (34+) of fact sheets that answer the question "How do I sell xyz at a farmers' market?" Since I do not know how to fit this type project under the metrics required by a FMPP grant, we'll probably have to find funds elsewhere, unfortunately.