

**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 1st, 2016 – September 30 th , 2016
Authorized Representative Name:	Jamie Choler
Authorized Representative Phone:	(314) 852-5426
Authorized Representative Email:	Jamie@Fairshares.org
Recipient Organization Name:	Fair Shares CCSA
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Fair Shares Delivers - Just Local Food
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-LFPPX-MO-0104
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Saint Louis/ Missouri
Total Awarded Budget:	100,000

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: Build walk-in cooler to expand capacity.

a. Progress Made: Completed at the end of the first term of the grant.

b. Impact on Community:

The new cooler includes three glass display doors, which allow our members to see some of the additional food for sale. These doors allow us to carry a number of local products that we did not previously have the space to stock. One broad category is local flours. Fresh milled flours need cold refrigeration for ideal storage. Now that we have the space, we have been able to add several new farmers in Illinois who specialize in grains. As of this growing season we have pastry, oat, and buckwheat flour as well as rolled oats, oat groats, and two heirloom varieties of cornmeal (Bloody Butcher, and Blue Aztec).

Tangentially, because of the increased refrigerated cooler space, we were also able to begin a cut-flower csa program as an addition to our food shares. It's still in its fledgling stage, but we send out around 10 bouquets per week from an urban flower farm. These bouquets include herbs and edible flowers, and have added to the overall value we offer to our members.

ii. Goal/Objective 2: Lease a delivery van – rewritten in the grant as rental of delivery van.

a. Progress Made:

This works on a week to week basis for our business delivery program. Renting a van for one day per week instead of leasing for two years significantly reduced the cost of the project, and fulfills the same need, so we see this as win-win for everyone.

b. Impact on Community:

We have been able to utilize the vehicle for our growing business delivery program, increasing the distribution of local foods.

iii. Goal/Objective 3: Development of our “Fair Shares Delivers” business delivery program

a. Progress Made:

The weekly process of bagging and distributing our business delivery shares is well-established after two years of operation and has become more efficient and streamlined. It now fits well into the broader model of our Food Hub/CSA hybrid model. We have added 3 new delivery locations to our program and increased the number of active shares by over 15 percent, from 43 to 50.

b. Impact on Community:

We have increased our purchasing from farmers to meet the demand of the new shares, and have increased access to local food at the new businesses we are servicing.

iv. Goal/Objective 4: Promotion of Fair Shares and Local Foods

a. Progress Made:

Since the last progress report, we have made a number of efforts to ensure the success of this project. We have run \$3,400 worth of advertisements on a local community radio station (KDHX), and presented Fair Shares at several health fairs in an effort to increase consumer knowledge of our Fair Shares Delivers program.

b. Impact on Community:

We have definitely seen a positive impact from the promotion program. Our total number of weekly shares has increased to 295, which is more than we've had in several years. This has a direct impact on our local farming community since \$.75 of every dollar spent with us goes to our producers.

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
- ii. Number of jobs retained: 6
- iii. Number of indirect jobs created: Unknown (A conservative estimate of 4 workers per grower/producer would put it at 396)
- iv. Number of markets expanded: 3
- v. Number of new markets established: 15
- vi. Market sales increased by \$insert dollars and increased by insert percentage%.
- vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 64 (+ around 35 local value-added producers).

a. Percent Increase:

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?

We have expanded our delivery program to 15 new businesses and schools (although several discontinued participation). These range from small independent booksellers and schools, to large institutions like major hospitals and the Federal Reserve Bank of Saint Louis. The feedback we have gotten from the new members is that the convenience of our delivery program allows them to support local farmers on a weekly basis, whereas before they didn't have the time to seek out local food regularly (i.e. going to farm stands, farmers markets, etc.).

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

- i. Who are your community partners? The 11 businesses and schools that currently participate in our delivery program.
- ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project?
The businesses have provided drop off points for the delivery program and have promoted the eating of local food through internal communication channels. The Federal Reserve in particular has promoted Fair Shares by tying participation into their wellness program – giving health insurance discounts to employees who live a healthy lifestyle, and organizing participating members to represent Fair Shares at our booth at their annual health fair.

- iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this LFPP grant? New members at the businesses have posted our flyers in public places to help grow awareness of our program in an effort to increase participation. We are currently working with the H.R. departments at the businesses to work on expanding employee participation.
5. Did you use contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project? We only used contractors to build out the walk-in cooler. This was included in the match portion of our budget.
6. Have you publicized any results yet?*
- i. If yes, how did you publicize the results? We have publicized the results in our weekly interactions with our farmers, members, and on social media.
 - ii. To whom did you publicize the results? Our members, farmers, and social media audience.
 - iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? More than 1000 between the various groups.

*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? Not formally
- i. If so, how did you collect the information?
 - ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?

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? Yes

a. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award?

It is difficult to know the exact amount for two reasons. First, a number of members switch back and forth between our delivered shares and our regular shares. For example, our deliveries to schools stop in the summer, and these member families pick up directly from us for three months. We don't count them as delivery share recipients during this time, and don't account for them in the program income when picking up a regular share.

Second, we sell a significant amount of food beyond the base shares in the form of extra orders. People add on extra protein, dairy, produce, and grains. These additional sales account for about 20 percent of our income.

Conservatively, the program generated \$116,000 in sales. The majority of this amount, (around 75%) went directly to our farmers in the form of food purchases. The rest went towards other costs of operation - rent, utilities, etc.

It is also worth noting that our program was not fully up and running for the first 10 months of operation. Of the \$116,000 in sales, \$84,000 was generated in the second year of the grant, and the project (after the grant has ended) is bringing in a little over \$9,000 per month, \$7,000 of which is going directly to our farmers.

9. 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).

The most important outcome from our LFPP project was a stronger valuation of our current Fair Shares members. They were the key to the success of our local food delivery program. All but one of our new markets was created by direct intervention from a current member. They championed us at their schools and workplaces, and helped us to navigate the complexities and red tape of dealing with Human Resource departments at major institutions.

As an example, we approached a large hospital near our warehouse about offering our CSA shares to their 25,000 employees. We were summarily dismissed – they were not interested because their H.R. representative was personally uninterested. We were told no. Being persistent, we spoke with one of our members who we thought was a doctor at the hospital (he would regularly pick up his share wearing scrubs). It turned out he was head of the emergency room residency program, and within a month had 10 doctors and residents signed up for shares, and even signed up his department for weekly delivery of local milk and locally roasted coffee (about \$3,000 in extra sales annually, just so his staff can have good coffee everyday).

We learned that the most effective means of increasing local food consumption and participation with Fair Shares was to enlist our current members as advocates to their coworkers, friends, and families.

This leads to the only negative experience with the project – advertising. We spent thousands of dollars on advertising through radio, print, and social media. While it certainly increased public awareness of our 'brand', it did very little to grow our membership or increase our farmers' production. We ask every new member how they heard about us, and only one person who joined in the past two years did so because of ads. The most common responses are 'word of mouth', and 'web search'.

For future promotions, we will focus our resources on creating tools to help our members be better advocates for us. We see this as a more proactive approach to promotion than passive ads.

- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving: Our goals were generally achieved, this was a successful project.
- 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:

As a small family business with limited grant experience, we learned just how much administrative work there is with a large grant. This is especially true of the reporting requirements for a federally funded project. We figured it out, but it took us about a year to get the systems in place make our grant administration efficient. To paraphrase our German-American grandmother, the trick to cooking well is to 'clean as you go'. Dedicating time each week to grant administration was much easier than putting it off to the end of the month or quarter like we did early on in the process.

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.

We currently have several leads from current members on potential new delivery points for the next growing season. This includes a major healthcare group with thousands of employees and six separate facilities, so we feel optimistic about the continued growth of the program started with the LFPP grant.

As mentioned earlier, the project has taught us just how critical our current members are in expanding our program and increasing support of local farmers. We realize how important it is to arm our members with tools to help them get the word out. To this end, we have created a series of youtube testimonial videos that focus on different reasons people are members of our food hub. We think these will be extremely effective in helping our current members target new customers at their workplaces.

- 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?

We see a real need for improved infrastructure for value added production. Our growing season is longer here in Missouri than in some other parts of the country, but our farmers still have a significant 'fallow' season. We are exploring ideas for how to increase our farmers' cash flow, while reducing food waste, by using culled food in boutique value added items. There is a need for increased infrastructure to distribute these times, and we are looking for ways that we can meet this need.