

**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>	<i>September 30, 2015-September 29, 2017</i>
Authorized Representative Name:	Aaron Ray Tompkins
Authorized Representative Phone:	336-372-5597
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Recipient Organization Name:	Alleghany County
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Alleghany Food Initiative Market Access
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	15-LFPP-NC-0120
Year Grant was Awarded:	2015
Project City/State:	SPARTA, NC
Total Awarded Budget:	\$40,500.00

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.

Goal/Objective

- i. Delivery of farm products to market in an efficient and economical manner
 - a. Progress Made: A weekly schedule was set to provide deliveries to restaurants and farmers markets to assist in farmers products make it to retail and wholesale markets. Typically to provide the freshest products deliveries were made on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, each of these deliveries were based on location and need of products. This truly provided farmers greater market access thru aggregating multiple farms with one delivery. All of the producers agreed it was much easier to make one central location – our farmers market or stops along the route for delivery for product pick up and distribution.
 - b. Impact on Community: Allowed a consistent supply of products to be available year round for restaurants and direct consumer to purchase products and transport multiple farms products on the same delivery. This has increased profitability for expanding and new farmers. This has also created a greater understanding with the consumers of the availability of local food and the quality of products offered. Being able to try and provide a consistent product as long as possible is crucial for repeat buyers and increased total sales.
 - ii. Goal/Objective 2:
Increase the number of farms participating in the Alleghany Food initiative
 - a. Progress Made: Thirty six (36) new farms/ producers selling product. The increase of farms marketing products thru the Alleghany Food Int. is to be used to help support and increase sales of products. The major thing is for farmers to not consider this as their only marketing option but one of many pieces of the pie. On an individual producer increase in income was as little as \$5.00 and as much as \$7500.00 for some farmers. This truly assisted and help farmers become more profitable.
 - b. Impact on Community: Increase availability of a consistent local food product allowing individuals and restaurants to purchase products on a weekly basis year round. The awareness of local products due to promotion and availability has truly caused for demand and request of local products. This also has allowed for more dollars to be kept locally supporting local farms.
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, 2015). Include further explanation if necessary.
 - i. Number of direct jobs created: 1.5 Positions
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: 2 Positions
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: 7 additional on farm jobs
 - iv. Number of markets expanded: Expanded to Independence, VA, Durham, NC, Roaring Gap, NC, Miami, FL and direct to restaurant sales.

- v. Number of new markets established: Nine new direct marketing markets have been established plus two online only markets.
 - vi. Market sales increased by \$25,375.81 and increased by 194.2%.
 - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 46
 - a. Percent Increase: 475% From 8 farms to 46 Producer/farms.
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, we have been able to meet low income/low access populations: with a collaborative effort called Seniors Exercise to Nutrition with the support of the Allegheny Food Initiative, Allegheny Wellness Center, and Allegheny CARES. This is a program for seniors who meet exercise requirements then in return get vouchers to use at the farmers market: This has been supported financially thru Allegheny CARES to where Seniors can exercise and get healthy food in exchange for increasing their exercise habits: This is a Program that meet the follow Eligibility:
- Senior 65 or older:
 - Financial eligibility 200% of Federal Poverty Level
 - Proof of Income and Allegheny Co. Residence
 - Attend Silver Sneaker Classes (walking Group)
4. Discuss your community partnerships.
- i. Who are your community partners? Partners include the Allegheny County Chamber of Commerce, Allegheny 2020-A non-profit organization that strives to promote long-term sustainability and consumption of local products in the county. We also work with the regional Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture program and Neck of the Wood Regional Food Program. As well as Allegheny Cares and Allegheny Wellness Center in the Seniors to Exercise to Nutrition Program. Business planning and staff management was a partnership and a great asset with the Blue Ridge Economic Development Center.
 - ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project? Our partners have been essential in our sales gains within the past six months. Face to Face meetings with restaurants and vendor to help plan and market products based on availability.
 - iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this LFPP grant? The collaborative efforts of the Allegheny Food Initiative and its community partners will continue to improve our efforts to connect farmers with local customers, restaurants and retailers. Increases in availability of local food products as well as profits from local food sales achieved by farmers in Allegheny County will continue to increase.
5. did you use contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project? NO
6. Have you publicized any results yet?*
- i. If yes, how did you publicize the results? Print, Financial Reports, Survey from Educational programs.

- ii. To whom did you publicize the results? Customers, Producers, County Commissioners – Local county and Town Governnet and NC Cooperative Extension Reporting.
- iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? 157 people from direct contact measures:

*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? Surveys and Personal Interviews
- ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)? Need to look at ways to expand the number of man hours available for local food coordinator. Continue to look for new markets. Work with neighboring counties. Need to educate public on how many different products are available for purchase to consumers. Also, how to financially support a local food coordinator long term.

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? \$65,733.30 was generated and was dispersed to farmers: A percentage of each producers proceeds were retained to maintain the local food coordinator position in 2018 and on.

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). Lack of benefits and not a full time position for our local food coordinator.
Interns from local high school – GREAT!! Provide positive energy and new ideas for local food movement.
- i. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving: One lesson is to understand that you are marketing to a moving target with different products each month and make sure that you educate your customers on these products.
- 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: Focus on fewer markets with bigger sales at fewer places. Sometimes marketing to multiple locations caused a challenge in travel. Should focus first on the more in-depth and time consuming markets that have long term potential.

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.

Within the next twelve months the AFI will continue to facilitate sales and marketing of locally produced food products from Alleghany County. We are planning events such as a "Farm to Table Dinner" and promotional efforts for the Alleghany Farmers Market, to increase community awareness and purchases from local farmers. We strive to reach out to the local community by providing profitable avenues for farmers in our small, geographically isolated rural county to earn revenue from producing food. Some avenues include the county's Farmers Market, at least four new restaurants located in the county and promoting direct to customer sales in urban centers of NC, such as Durham. We continue to work with the local High School and have current FFA students that have raised livestock and sold meat products via the Alleghany Food Initiative Participation in the Local Food Promotion Program has provided the county with expanded resources and manpower, which enables us to expand our production, distribution and participating member capacities. This has resulted in the increase of food sales from farmers in Alleghany County, and has provided local restaurants and retailers the opportunity to include local food in their establishments.

Assistance from this grant has allowed us to add a part-time Local Food Coordinator (LFC) to our staff. This position has greatly expanded the capacity of the AFI to increase its presence in the community. The LFC communicates with both farmers and local establishments to facilitate sales and to help advise farmers production methods. This position assists with the Alleghany Farmers Market, and also delivers and sells products from Alleghany County, at neighboring Farmers Markets. The job also covers providing butchering instructions to picking up meats from processing plants, by meeting with vegetable producers and connecting them with interested chefs the Local Food Coordinator remains involved with the production of food in the region. The LFC also has marketed, distributed and sold food products direct to customers in the surrounding counties of the Blue Ridge Mountains, while exploring new markets in North Carolina's growing urban centers. The Local Food Coordinator attends community meetings and events informing local citizens about where and how they can purchase local food products. With the goal of increasing the production of local foods while facilitating sales, the diverse tasks completed by the Local Food Coordinator have had a profound impact on the total sales and community participation in the Alleghany Food Initiative.

- 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? The largest challenge for us with the local food coordinator is it being a part time position it can be a challenge for someone who is looking for full time work and a challenge to maintain a consistent person in this position. Over this grant we have had two different employees that both left due availability of full time employment. Staffing is crucial for the success of the local food movement.