

**Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)
Final Performance Report**

Report Number/Period: 04-Final (09/30/14 – 09/29/16)
Date: December 29, 2016
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Recipient Name: Red Willow Center
Project Title: Expanding & Strengthening Red Willow Farmers Market
Grant Number: 14-FMPPX-NM-0031
Project Location: Taos, New Mexico
Total Awarded Budget: \$ 22,333

Goals of the Project:

1) provide support for the improvement, expansion, strengthening, and financial sustainability of an evolving Native American-sited farmers market so as to make accessible, and better known to the public (especially tourists passing by), the market's locally-produced quality foods, 2) expand the opportunities available to local farmers, ranchers, and value-added producers, and 3) provide for leadership succession.

- *Goal #1: Improve/strengthen operations & services of the year-round Red Willow Farmers Market.*
- *Goal #2: Differentiate for customers between the seasonal and indoor markets and upgrade advertising signage-*
- *Goal #3: Provide professional board leadership, market management, and vendor trainings.*

Red Willow Farmers Market (RWFm) launched in 2007 as an outdoor seasonal market, and in 2011 the indoor RWFm complement opened its doors, making the market year-round. This project will (A) increase consumption of, and access to, Taos Pueblo-produced foods in these market sectors: (1) Taos Pueblo community members, mostly low-income; and (2) the general public of the Taos-area ruralplex, consisting of a multicultural population primarily of Native Americans, Hispanics, and Anglos; and (B) develop new markets for Taos Pueblo producers, especially a ready-made agri-tourism population.

i. Goal 1: Improve/strengthen operations & services of the year-round Red Willow Farmers Market.

a. Progress Made:

Object/Activity 1: This activity is comprised of supplies that upgrade and improve the market, non-consumable supplies that upgrade/improve the market: Market management has completed the purchase of all approved grant supplies.

Object/Activity 2: This activity includes agri-tourism and efficiency improvements—market interior has been updated with (a) wall mural painted over an adobe (mud & straw) wall, (b) new shelving and signage, and (c) a self-guiding tour map is complete. We are considering making this a virtual tour.

Trainings & Market Management Update: Market management—have attended both the 2015 and 2016 New Mexico state farmers market conference in Albuquerque, NM, and ideas gained there are being implemented.

b. **Impact on Community:** the community feedback indicates the appreciation for the upgrades, being more clearly informed of the market hours, and location.

ii. **Goal 2: Differentiate for customers between the seasonal and indoor markets with new advertising webpage and signage.**

a. **Progress Made:** Purchase of portable offsite public signage for the indoor market to distinguish it from typical seasonal markets and to reach out to the large population of tourists driving by is complete and being used; an outdoor hanging banner for the indoor market is successfully displayed; two preprinted double-sided market entrance feather flags are purchased and are currently being used for the indoor market entranceway; a webpage for Red Willow Center with information and a link for the farmer's market was completed and is in use since early 2015 (www.redwillowcenter.com).

b. **Impact on Community:** Increased support from Taos Pueblo tribal members during winter market.

iii. **Goal/Objective 3: Provide professional board leadership, market management, and vendor trainings.**

a. **Progress Made:** There have been three successful board meetings/trainings since grant start. (1) Training for the Red Willow Center Board of Directors, the nonprofit organization operating Red Willow Farmers Market, was initiated on May 30th (Board Member Roles and Responsibilities, Visioning, Strategic Planning), continued in August (Strategic Planning, Action Plan), and carried through into March 2015, (2) Market management attended the annual (2016) New Mexico Farmers Market Association meeting in Albuquerque, NM, in March. (3) An implementation plan was completed for the "Produced at Taos Pueblo" label that includes displays for jars, packages, bulk and packaged fresh produce, and other value-added products, and a poster explanation of the meaning of the quality standards label. In February of 2016, all Market staff participated in a Red Willow Center Technical Assistance training that included market development, training, and promotions. Planning for the next three years was accomplished and currently being developed and included into the Red Willow Center Market Plan.

b. **Impact on Community:** Improved service to community, and a clearer connection of the healthful produce and value added goods sold and produced at Red Willow Farmer's Market.

2. **Overall impact of the project on the intended beneficiaries.**

RWFM improvements and expansion retained two market jobs, expand intern jobs from six to twelve (73% increase) and indirectly created as many as nine entrepreneurial vendor jobs. Overall, the number of farmer and producer beneficiaries number at least 21.

A. Much-improved indoor market – both exterior & interior, measured by a short written customer satisfaction sampling survey with rating scale (via anonymous feedback/suggestion box), market vendors' feedback questionnaire with rating scale (also anonymous), and an increase in market sales revenue from baseline of \$2,326 (goal ≥ \$2,000). Total indoor market

vendor sales from the 5-month period April through September 2016 were \$11,633.86, and in Summer of 2016 we began to charge \$10 per day for non-Taos Pueblo vendors, and \$5 per day for Taos Pueblo Tribal vendors for the outside market and 20% on all sales for all indoor Market vendors.

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?
 - A. There has been a significant increase in both tribal and non-tribal customers at the weekly Farmer's Market. Currently we have seen on average 12 more Taos Pueblo tribal members per market and 20 more non-tribal customers. We believe this to be a direct result of the weekly email blast/newsletter, the vendor training and partnering, the new signage, new website (www.redwillowcenter.com), and the increased attendance and presence of Red Willow Center's staff at Community and local events (displaying the new banners, brochures).
 - B. With the W.I.C. program, we have seen an increase in, low income customers, breastfeeding mothers, and seniors.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

We partnered with Taos Pueblo Community Health Services Programs: Diabetes Prevention, community outreach, Recovery, Healthy Hearts, and the Senior Center. Red Willow Farmer's Market provides a tribal discount and the Community Health Services Director issues Farmer's Market coupons used to purchase only Red Willow Farm Produce, which in return Red Willow Center/Farmer's Market is reimbursed for all purchases minus the tribal discount.

We also partner with the New Mexico W.I.C. Program- by accepting W.I.C and W.I.C. for Seniors, we are increasing our revenue through increased sales, and providing families and seniors a healthier and less expensive alternative to purchasing healthy, local produce.

Red Willow Center/Farmer's Market, we'll continue to foster and grow these relationships with both these community partners and their clients/our customers.

5. Are you using contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the FMPP project?

Red Willow Center does use contractors for farming and other community projects, for the market, the Farmer's Market Manager and clerk position are and have been contractor positions. The growth, sales and implementation of this grant would not have been successful without these two positions.

6. Have you publicized any results yet?

Not yet. We are planning a year-end reporting to our community during a planned event, wherein we will announce and share our grant experiences throughout the past year. Red Willow Center also provides reports to the Taos Pueblo Tribal leadership regarding awarded grants. We will also provide updated information in January on our website and social media sites regarding all finished grant outcomes and awards.

7. Have you collected any feedback from your community and additional stakeholders about your work?
 - i. Yes, between July through September 2016 Red Willow Center conducted surveys at the Farmer's Market regarding the overall impression of the market improvements. This

survey was both written and verbal and was given to both customers and vendors of the market during market hours and at planned vendor meetings.

The vendors were supportive and overall most people who took the survey were impressed with the “new look” of the market, and appreciated the new signage, especially during the summer time when the main highway was under construction. Signs were used to re-route customers of the market and vendors onto back roads, and were easily visible in all the plants and weeds. All appreciated the updates on the market hours and the seasonal updates as well.

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:

(A) Final Expenses were \$21,928- A budget revision was submitted on 9/23/16 and was approved by USDA FMPP, \$405 in remaining funds were ok'd to be de-obligated by Project Leader at this time, and is reflected in the Final Budget Allocation #3 as well as in the SF-425.

- ii. Did the project generate any income?
It is difficult to determine income generated by the improvements made during these last six-months, but \$11,633.86 in sales during April through September 29, 2016 was reached.

9. Lessons Learned:

Overall this was a successful grant. There were some glitches along the way that could not have been prevented, some personal reasons and project lead replacements (2), but overall the grant was administered successfully and all approved supplies and deliverables were purchased and implemented. Supplies purchased are in use and are positively impacting the market, the customers, vendors and all who come to the farm or pass it on the highway. Lessons learned are positive ones, how to successfully implement a USDA FMPP grant, reports, and budget, also how to better serve the community and partnerships and create new ones based on need and desire to better impact the future of the market and its relationships.

10. Future Work:

The future plan is to further develop the Red Willow Farmer’s market through value-added goods to include a community kitchen, classes on food safety and preparation, marketing training for current vendors, and increase support, opportunities and training for future farmers. Also to continue to have this space for vendors, create more opportunities for sales into other markets through partnerships, and potentially expand into CSA’s. Market sales should increase by at least 10% each year beginning in 2017, and at least 1 full-time market position should be created, and at least 5 more vendors added to the outdoor market and at least 2 more value added vendors will be added to the indoor market.