

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 LFPP staff 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>	October 1, 2014- September 30, 2016
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Recipient Organization Name:	Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	To enhance and expand Farm to Early Care fresh food purchasing program, and the capacity of the distributor to participate
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-LFPPX-NY-0124
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Brooklyn, NY
Total Awarded Budget:	\$73,988

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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Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation appreciates support provided by the United States Department of Agriculture which has helped improve access to healthy foods among the children, caregivers, and staff of early care centers across Central Brooklyn. The below chart encapsulates the progress made possible by the grant, while the following narrative provides more detail into our efforts and outcomes.

	Program Pilot	Current
# Early Care organizations	1	7
# of sites participating in institutional sourcing	10	28
# of sites participating in farm share	0	9
# Neighborhoods Served	1	8
# Students served through school meals	600	1475
Purchase Volume	\$564	\$23,373

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: Students, families and staff of early care centers have access to healthful meals with fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and fresh, local food.

Progress Made:

As part of our commitment to bringing healthy farm fresh food to students and families of early care facilities, we established a goal of reaching 1,500 children attending 25 early care centers, as well as serving 60 families through farm shares and related programming. Today, we have nearly reached or exceeded our goals with 28 early care programs having improved access to nutritious, farm fresh foods for school meals, 1,475 children receiving high quality school meals with produce from regional farms, and 122 families and center staff participating in farm share programs.

A significant development during this past quarter was our expansion beyond just serving early care centers to also working with family home care sites. Four home care sites utilized our farm share program to supply farm fresh produce for children in their care. At least 35 little ones benefitted from this expanded effort.

Also noteworthy was the exponential growth of the farm share program. We expanded our produce distribution partners, and realized four times the amount of farm share participants than in our first year of the program.

Impact on Community:

In addition to students whose meals have been changed, there are more students who were beneficiaries of cooking demonstrations, classroom programming, and intergenerational nutrition workshops. Many family members were also reached through these activities, including parents /guardians, grandparents and siblings.

We are driving systems-level changes to facilitate improved access to farm fresh food for underserved communities. We have made significant headway in improving school meals as well as educating families and teachers about locally-grown, healthy foods. When we started three years ago, we had one organization partner consisting of 10 early care sites who procured fresh produce sporadically. Today we partner with five early care networks encompassing 28 participating sites, some of them procuring on a regular basis. Students and families have improved access to fruits and vegetables that are high quality, low cost, and conveniently accessible. Our success with farm to early care institutional sourcing has also helped to prime the pipeline for broader systems change and improved healthy eating in the home.

Throughout this innovative work, which is on the rise around the nation, we are creating best practices, leading dialogue, and sharing our model for others to learn from by way of panels, conferences, presentations, and concept papers etc.

- ii. Goal/Objective 2: Child care programs will have an array of initiatives that engage parents, staff, and children to promote healthy eating and active living.

Progress Made:

In addition to integrating healthy produce into meals, we continue to partner with centers on year-round programming to engage children, parents and staff in healthy lifestyles. We have held 8 staff trainings and 55 parent education events/ cooking demonstrations. Through onsite parent assessments and engagement events, we also educate families about community resources, such as free fitness classes or public benefits enrollment options. Our aim is to transform our partner childcare institutions into model health-promoting environments. Families and staff of partner sites can join a farm share, participate in cooking demonstrations, or attend “fresh food day” events. They also have access to a wealth of resources through our wide network of collaborators.

Complementing these efforts, we have created a resource tool kit to support potential early care partners. The kit provides information on farm to school mini-grant opportunities, partners such as garden organizations and advocacy groups, as well as data and documents that speak to the value of Farm to Early Care work.

Impact on Community:

At least 6 schools including Little Sun People and Brooklyn Kindergarten Society now have health promoting policies that prioritize fresh local food consumption, and physical activity and limit processed sugary food/ drinks. One center remarked that in the previous school year, sweets were consumed sometimes daily as part of school celebrations. Their policy changes markedly reduce the consumption of these low quality foods, and also engage families in conversation about health promoting behaviors.

We also have offered several trainings to educate staff on working with fresh foods for school meals. One recent training for in-home family care providers discussed the new Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines, and how they can be met with low cost locally grown fresh foods.

In our three years leading Farm to Early Care efforts, we have developed a network of agencies who participate in the program in some capacity. They attend information sessions, implement health promotion strategies such as promoting water or physical activity at their center, and remain in our information sharing network through newsletters, funding announcements etc. Through this network,

all of the centers have improved access to information about how to purchase and prepare fresh local food and how to maintain active living, as well as resources that parents can tap into to improve family health. This complements the improved access to on-site fresh local food and serves to drive demand in a myriad of ways within the community.

- iii. Goal/Objective 3: Children and parents will have hands-on learning about fresh and healthy food by having access to school-based gardens and associated lessons

Progress Made:

Children and families have the opportunity to visit one of nearly 40 Brooklyn based community gardens that are managed by partners such as Isabahlia Ladies of Elegance Foundation, Brooklyn Queens Land Trust, and Hattie Carthan Community Market. Some teachers/ parents have taken advantage of these options and attended farmers markets/ garden days. Parents and children at Little Sun People and Little Maroons participated in fresh food education trainings, and children from Little Sun People regularly attended our Marcy Plaza Farmers market. There was at least one visit to a Brooklyn Queens Land Trust community garden, and partner child care centers either have access to small garden plots or indoor growing spaces for related activities/ lessons.

Impact on Community:

Most sites participating in institutional sourcing also have onsite growing spaces for the classrooms. Those who have requested additional assistance have been connected to gardening experts as well as resources to improve classroom gardening spaces, their produce and herb yields. Because of our leveraged relationships, our partner early care center students and families have improved access to over 40 community gardens and urban 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, 20__). Include further explanation if necessary.

Cumulative numbers since October 1, 2014 indicate:

- i. Number of direct jobs created: 1
- ii. Number of jobs retained: 50
- iii. Number of indirect jobs created: 4
- iv. Number of markets expanded: 1
- v. Number of new markets established: 9 early care organizations have participated among 8 communities, and 28 sites
- vi. Market sales increased by \$23,373 and increased by 4044%.
- vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 106
Corbin Hill Food Hub works with 21 farmers in the region, and Hattie Carthan Farmers Market sources from 5 Brooklyn gardens and 85 farms through the Lancaster Cooperative.

a. Percent Increase: 405%

- 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?

Initially our program started in partnership with a group of Head Start centers serving low income families in Bedford Stuyvesant. Our work has now grown to include 28 centers across eight Brooklyn

neighborhoods. These neighborhoods represent a diverse mix of ethnic populations, including large African, Caribbean, Latin and Chinese American populations. We continue to work in Brownsville, Brooklyn—an area with some of the highest poverty and unemployment rates in the city. Our farm share and institutional food program also serve Brooklyn Kindergarten Society, a network of centers that are all collocated within public housing developments. Most recently during this reporting period, our customer base diversified to include family home care providers. Given the large number of children in such settings, we found this to be an important milestone.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

Community partners are essential to our work. Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation is the backbone organization for the Partnership for a Healthier Brooklyn, a community based coalition comprised of 100 community based organizations working together to address major health inequities that disproportionately affect low income communities of color in Central Brooklyn. In this role we are driving the efforts of our member organizations and agencies to improve access to healthy foods and increase physical activity. Many of the members of the Partnership for a Healthier Brooklyn provide technical and programmatic support to this local food promotion initiative as nutrition and gardening educations providers, urban gardens, and other local food and health promoting agencies.

In addition to members of the Partnership for a Healthier Brooklyn, our food hub and early care partners are integral to the program. By providing space for the programming and access to parents, children and staff, the early care sites are the primary vehicles through which we are increasing access to healthy, locally sourced food and raising awareness of the importance of healthy eating. That this is occurring in neighborhoods where community access to local and healthful foods was limited at best, is even more impressive.

In addition to the early care organizations we work with, we rely on strong relationships with Corbin Hill Farms as our wholesale produce vendor and farm share provider. We also work with Hattie Carthan Farmers Market as a farm share provider as well as to support access to community garden visits and educational programming. In addition, during this reporting period we began working with Brooklyn-based fresh food access cooperative, Brooklyn Packers. Brooklyn Packers is supporting our farm share programming with sorting and delivery to sites that have only a small number of participants, helping them overcome barriers to entry caused by minimum purchasing requirements needed for participation in Corbin Hills Farm share. Lastly, we provided leveraged funds and project support to the Brooklyn Kindergarten Society so that they were able to refine and boost their farm to early care program participation.

We anticipate that our child care centers will continue to purchase local food beyond the grant term now that systems are in place and there is strong momentum. In addition, the Partnership for a Healthier Brooklyn will continue to strengthen its healthy living agenda and seek resources to support it. Finally, we will continue to work with the key partners listed above as well as our network of community garden organizations to facilitate garden visits as well as to provide supplies and food growing expertise to child care centers and other institutions. Collaboration is integral to our work. Partnerships have helped create community-wide buy-in and engendered meaningful relationships that are necessary to make programs like ours enduring and impactful.

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

As reported previously, Brooklyn Kindergarten Society, Bed Stuy Campaign Against Hunger, and Child Development Support Center served as subcontractors. Supported through leveraged funds, Brooklyn Kindergarten Society coordinated efforts to improve access to a small network of family home care centers as well as served as the lead in a 5 site collective purchasing arrangements for institutional meals and farm share programming at one site. Last year in partnership with Bed Stuy Campaign Against Hunger and Child Development Support Center, we hosted convenings of early care centers. The subcontractors led presentations about fresh local food, food justice, and food systems, as well as instructed participants on farm to school programming and how they can participate.

6. Have you publicized any results yet?

Our Farm to Early Care efforts were recently highlighted in the case study [*Good Food, Great Kids: Making Practice and policy work for Farm to Early Care and Education*](#), completed by pfc Social Impact Advisors. This year we have also presented at a number of broadcasted webinars and national conferences including for the National Farm to School Network in the webinar entitled [*Farm to Early Care, A Culturally Guided Approach*](#). Access to the recorded webinar is available through the hyperlink. We were also selected to present at the upcoming National Head Start Associate Parent, Staff and Leadership Conference, with more than 1,000 expected attendees. We have also participated in numerous local/ citywide forums and talks regarding healthy food access, including the LFPP/Farm to Early Care efforts in our content.

Previously published articles include an opinion piece published in Our Times Press, The Brooklyn Reader, and Brooklyn Family (part of the NY Parent network of publications) entitled [*How Farm to Preschool Program Makes a Difference*](#) (Page 36). The publications have a readership of about 50,000 each. We publicized the pop up market held at BSEDC through an article in Brooklyn Reader, with a reach of 50,000, [*Brooklyn Early Care Program Debuts New Pop Up Farmers Market*](#). Additionally, we issued a press release about the USDA LFPP grant that went out to our mailing list of 20,000.

Recruitment flyers and newsletters have also been produced and shared among the over 40 early care agencies that are part of our network, copies of the documents are being sent with the report as an attachment.

7. Have you collected any feedback from your community and additional stakeholders about your work?

We regularly seek feedback about our work through partner meetings, convenings, individual interviews and surveys. Partners and prospective partners share their experiences, challenges, and barriers. This in turn informs strategies moving forward. Of note, feedback from our institutional partners regarding challenges to participation related to delivery and distribution logistics is what forced us to rethink strategies to address delivery and storage solutions.

During this reporting period, 80 Brooklyn Kindergarten Society staff and families were surveyed regarding their needs and interest in the community food and fitness activities provided at the centers. Their feedback reveal an appreciation for the school meal improvements and an interest in farm share participation.

We also completed plate waste assessments at 9 centers, surveying 340 students. This garnered direct feedback from children to help us improve program offerings and food purchases. It was identified that vegetable plate waste was most common compared to other meal components. We have completed mostly pre-assessments, with the intention to follow up post-intervention and see reduced fruit and vegetable plate waste. Two classrooms (19 students) were surveyed as part of initial follow up assessment and these results show reduced vegetable plate waste when compared to the sites initially assessed. More post-assessments are planned to determine changes in consumption patterns as a result of the program.

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?
 - a. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award?
No income was generated

9. Lessons Learned:

In the last two years the program has grown exponentially. While we remain committed to program outcomes, we also remain open to new insights and lessons learned along the way due to the innovative nature of our efforts. Three major themes have surfaced throughout our work:

- 1) Family and staff engagement from multiple levels within an organization is critical, with an emphasis on the unique needs/limitations of each of our stakeholder subsets such as working families, program staff, and school administrators, to name a few. We have used fresh food day celebrations to engage families and trainings for staff to share experiences, lessons learned, priorities, and challenges. These events remain an important programmatic element.
- 2) Regular communication and ongoing partner support through education, training and resource referrals is necessary for successful implementation. In particular, education around food storage, fresh food preparation, institutional menu planning, and existing policy and financing supports such as CACFP are important
- 3) Food delivery logistics and limitations due to seasonality are overarching challenges that must be addressed on a system level to ensure broader adaptation. Transportation and delivery logistics were particularly challenging for smaller sites. Strategies to mitigate this barrier include diversifying vendor pool, creating collective purchasing arrangements and technical tools to facilitate fresh food purchasing. For centers, planning in the spring around limited New York state grown produce options, and working to address last mile storage and delivery channels have been areas of consideration. For families, thoughtful incentives for farm share participation (like accepting EBT through vouchers and eliminating the need to pay in advance), and making the systems for coordinating the program simple and turn-key were necessary.

We found that high touch assistance and support might be needed initially in order to get partners off the ground, but that implementing systems to imbed programming into an organizations' ongoing agenda makes it easier to eventually let centers manage programming independently based upon their

own needs. Diversifying the mix of organizational stakeholders and champions is also necessary in order to ensure long term sustainability.

Leveraging our experience, extensive network of partners, and connections to resources has been key to our success. Our asset-based and community-centric approach to program implementation can be iterative and refined based on partner needs and existing community resources. We are hopeful that our lessons learned will prove beneficial for others who wish to undertake similar programs in their community.

10. Future Work:

We will continue our efforts of improving fresh food access for communities in Central Brooklyn, using high impact, community based institutions as access points. At the close of this funding cycle we have increased the number of participating community and regional producers, purchasing volume, participating early care sites, new and sustained jobs, and improved access to fresh local food education and garden access for more than 1500 students, staff and families. This is in addition to organizational policy and procurement updates that will continue to engage newly enrolled families/ children. We have screened our partner sites to identify the best positioned partners to deepen our impact with an eye toward regular fresh food procurement, family access, and wraparound supports for families. We've also used technical assistance and staff training to ensure their continued progress and engagement. We will evaluate these sites regularly in order to develop the optimum model for replication.

Next steps include scaling the program in partnership with other large early care groups, head start/ early learn providers and other centers that serve low income families and persons of color. We are looking to connect borough wide and regionally with others participating in similar community food access efforts, and are also looking at state and federal policy supports for the initiative. In addition to scaling up within early care sites, we have begun to work with other institutional groups such as hospitals and senior care centers. Our vision is to shift the institutional purchasing environment for all high impact, large scale community food programs in order to broaden food access and transform preferences of those fed by these programs through ongoing education and exposure.