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: ***(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)***	9/30/14 – 9/30/16
Authorized Representative Name:	Kerry Flynn
Authorized Representative Phone:	330.286.0688
Authorized Representative Email:	Kerry@growyoungstown.org
Recipient Organization Name:	Grow Youngstown
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Farm to YOU Boost
Grant Agreement Number: ***(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)***	14-LFPPX-OH-0139
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Youngstown, OH
Total Awarded Budget:	97,186

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:** Samantha Turner**; Email:** ssturner08@yahoo.com**; Phone:** 330.559.6679

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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:** Hire a staff

      a. **Progress Made:** 1. Kerry Flynn was hired in March 2015 as the Sales & Market Manager. She has been responsible for gaining new members as well as institutional counts, gaining new farmer and producer relationships from which to purchase CSA food items, marketing and outreach, grant implementation, and organizational functionality.
      2. F2Y has gone through several delivery drivers, but created one new job in Youngstown and was able to provide part-time employment to multiple individuals throughout the grant cycle.

      b. **Impact on Community:** 1a. Sales & Market Manager has become a full time position, which was an improvement made possible by LFPP funds. Prior to LFPP implementation, the Sales & Market Manager position was a part time, seasonal position called the F2Y manager. 1b. Since the beginning of this grant cycle, F2Y has serviced 76 underserviced families through subsidization of shares. The goal for this grant was to have 60 families receive this benefit. We are pleased to have reached and surpassed our goal by an additional 27 percent. 1c. Since the beginning of this grant cycle, F2Y has provided full-priced shares to 278-accounts. The goal for this grant was to have 300 shares by 2016. We find our accomplishment reasonably close to the mark, having achieved nearly 93 percent of our goal. 1d. F2Y has added two significant new producers of local, organic produce. We have also added one value-added producer for locally-made specialty products. We have found that while consistency and volume we expect is still hard to come by, partnerships with the right producers are mutually beneficial. 1e. In an effort to save our natural resources, we have replaced the weekly recipe cards with an active and frequently-updated Pinterest recipe site (pinterest.com/growyoungstown), where members can access dozens of recipes organized by crop type. 1f. Prep & Preservation class programming has taken place with CSA members, disenfranchised members of our community, new mothers, and the general public. 1g. GY's website (growyoungstown.org) has been kept current and updated as information changes or becomes available.
      2a. In Summer2015, we experimented with two pickup days per week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We experienced small increases in success and had significantly higher costs associated with the additional miles and hours spent delivering. We returned to a once-weekly model for Summer2016. 2b. F2Y succeeded in servicing a total of ten institutional accounts, including one local health food store in Youngstown, which agreed to carry local produce. These accounts not only provide revenue for F2Y, but also further our mission of getting fresh, local produce into the hands of more area families. 2c. The creation of a delivery driver position has helped F2Y become more efficient

overall, as the Sales and Market Manager gained more time to focus on other program-wide tasks.

ii. **Goal/Objective 2:** Equipment & technology
   a. **Progress Made:** Incomplete
   b. **Impact on Community:** 1. Purchase of two floral coolers and fall crop storage had been terminated due to unexpected costs. These designated funds were approved to be instead spent on repairs to catastrophic damage our delivery truck incurred. 2. Scales for each pickup site were purchased and distributed. 3. Our website received a total overhaul and has been regularly maintained by the Sales & Market Manager. Its new design is both more user-friendly and aesthetically pleasing. Although our milestone goal was to have more than one contributor to the website's content (projected to be the Director and the Sales & Market Manager), with the former Director's departure in July 2015, there has only been one office staff person since. 4. The software program leased by F2Y, Farmigo, has been instrumental in improving the way the CSA is run. While the monthly fee is considerable, Farmigo simultaneously holds our member information, payment history, past orders, and more. It is also an easy way for members to make changes to their own accounts, instead of having to contact the Sales & Market Manager. This system has been superior to our past system, Small Farm Central, and another program we considered leasing, Local Food Market Place.

iii. **Goal/Objective 3:** Outreach
   a. **Progress Made:** Complete
   b. **Impact on Community:** Seasonal creation of promotional materials, such as rack card flyers, sign-up sheets, ordering materials, etc, have been designed, printed, and distributed. These materials helped to gain new interest in F2Y, translated into new customers, and increased our total revenue.

iv. **Goal/Objective 4:** Technical assistance
   a. **Progress Made:** Incomplete
   b. **Impact on Community:** Rosemont Farm, which was to benefit from technical assistance provided by Elsa Higby, closed its business.

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:** 1, delivery driver
   ii. **Number of jobs retained:** 1, market manager
   iii. **Number of indirect jobs created:** 1, farm staff
   iv. **Number of markets expanded:** 14: 10 pickup locations, three restaurants, one grocer
   v. **Number of new markets established:** 4 pickup locations
   vi. **Market sales increased by $**N/A **and increased by** N/A**%.**
   vii. **Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project:** 38
      a. **Percent Increase:** 81

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?** An expansion of F2Y's programming, including additional new locations in selected communities, increasing subsidized low-income produce access, providing cooking demonstrations, and sharing recipes

for how to use less common fruits and vegetables.

4. **Discuss your community partnerships.**
    i. **Who are your community partners?** Youngstown CityScape; Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation; The Rescue Mission of the Mahoning Valley; Mercy Health Partners; The Youngstown Flea; Oh Wow! Science Center; Youngstown State University; Davis Family YMCA; Austintown Library; Poland Library; Newport Library; Main Library; Canfield Library; Trumbull Neighborhood Partnership; Jewish Community Center of Youngstown; Erie Terminal Place
    ii. **How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project?** Youngstown CityScape has provided a great deal of auxiliary support. Support included shared use of office space, brainstorming, and consulting for our program. Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation (YNDC) provided the delivery vehicle we have been using as a lease. Most truck-related details have been handled by YNDC. YNDC also forwarded some funds towards the execution of our cooking class series. The Rescue Mission of the Mahoning Valley provided support to our community garden program. Mercy Health Partners, The Youngstown Flea, and Oh Wow! Science Center helped to provide exposure for our program. All other mentioned partners, both public and private, have provided locations used to host F2Y's pickups.
    iii. **How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this LFPP grant?** We intend to keep all relationships open for future work.

5. **did you use contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project?** Youngstown CityScape was contracted to help us develop our F2Y program and work on grant management. Their work was essential to the success of this grant.

6. **Have you publicized any results yet?*** No
    i. **If yes, how did you publicize the results?**
    ii. **To whom did you publicize the results?**
    iii. **How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach?**

    ***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?** No
    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?** $115,819.81 was generated and directly reinvested into produce

purchasing, staff wages, and other F2Y projects.

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).** 1. Founder and long-time director Elsa Higby left GY abruptly in July 2015. The program has had difficulty recovering from the loss of this staff. As Ms Higby never provided herself a salary, it was impossible to hire a replacement for her, as funds were not available. This event caused the loss of 50% of the office staff, in turn leaving all office activities to the Sales & Market Manager. Some auxiliary tasks were not completed according to this timeline. 2. Gina DeCarlo, former F2Y manager, left her position. It took several months to find and hire the current Sales & Market Manager. 3. Several delivery drivers filtered through the position. Time taken to rehire and train new drivers detracted from Sales & Market Manager's time spent on other tasks. 4. Our delivery truck experienced several costly repairs, which diverted funds away from other goals, such as the floral coolers and fall crop storage. 5. The weather is always a huge variable in agricultural pursuits. In the summers 2015 and 2016, several of GY's partner farmers experienced challenging conditions. Late spring of 2015 had days with temperatures in the low 90s, shriveling leafy greens that are usually bountiful at that time of year. This very hot period was followed by about six weeks of essentially nonstop rain, and then another six weeks with almost no rain. All of these conditions made planting successions of crops challenging if not futile. However, favorable conditions in the fall of 2015 helped many farmers rebound from the slow spring and summer months. The summer 2016 season was, according to one farmer who has worked the land since 1994, the "worst weather I've seen in my life." The season was consistently 5-15°F above average, which negatively impacted crops of leafy greens and root vegetables in particular. Furthermore, rainfall amounts were severely below average, with stretches of 90+ days with less than two total inches of rain. This is all to say, our farmers have had a rough two seasons throughout this grant. Some farms' production is easily down 50% overall, and down 90-100% on particular crop varieties. This means that the farmers have less to offer F2Y's CSA (as many have obligations to their own CSAs or farmers markets), and prices for some items have increased as a result of supply and demand. This has negatively impacted the quality and variety of produce in each CSA share basket, leaving some customers feeling jilted. 6. Office partners at Youngstown CityScape were able to provide consulting to help keep the program on track. 7. Our program has gained more popularity in the suburbs, adding o the number of full-price paying customers. These customers will help to cover the cost of our subsidized customers and corresponding EBT fees. 8. We have gained new partnerships with reputable other organizations in the area to try to expand our impact in our community. One local hospital, one local food promotional organization run by a non-profit, and several area non-profits with focuses ranging from city revitalization, to science education, to beautification. These collaborations provided extra opportunity for exposure of F2Y which may have translated into increased membership, or may translate for the next season.
   ii. **If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:** We have either met or been reasonably close to benchmark member numbers, and have plans (below) on how to expand our market.

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:** The primary lesson learned is that quality of staff is just as important as insuring there is a large enough staff roster. GY will have trouble gaining ground until funding for at least one additional full-time staff person has been secured.

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.** 1. We have had considerable success in adding suburban customers, all of who pay full price for shares. We intend to keep these customers, but draw our focus back to Youngstown inner city residents who are in the greatest need for quality fresh produce. This aligns more closely with GY's mission. 2. Mercy Health Partners, a local hospital in Mahoning County, has agreed to sponsor some shares through their Fruit & Vegetable Prescription Program. This program awards vouchers of $25 per month for up to six months during the summer months, which can be used at designated farmers markets and with F2Y. Although we have been in agreements with Mercy for two years, turnout of their members to F2Y is low. We seek to re-solidify this relationship and gain members from Mercy.

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?** 1. Our high tunnel located at Fairgreen Community Garden is to be leased out to a beginning farmer for next season. This will provide higher availability of locally grown crops for F2Y to purchase. 2. Conduct research to determine at what price point low-income families can reasonably afford produce, instead of the current system of trial and error that F2Y has employed. 3. Secure funding in order to accomplish the goals that were put on hold during the lifetime of this grant (i.e. floral cooler purchase for leafy greens and fall crop storage).