

**Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP)  
Final Performance Report**

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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](mailto: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.

<b>Report Date Range:</b> <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	March 31, 2018 – June 30, 2018
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<b>Recipient Organization Name:</b>	Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council
<b>Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:</b>	Bridging the Food Gap in Central Oregon
<b>Grant Agreement Number:</b> <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	15LFPPOR0040
<b>Year Grant was Awarded:</b>	2015
<b>Project City/State:</b>	Bend, Oregon
<b>Total Awarded Budget:</b>	\$96,598

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: Improve post-harvest handling and transportation of local agricultural products for the wholesale market by providing supplies and infrastructure.

a. Progress Made:

1. COIC purchased insulated shopping totes and wax boxes to be used by local food distributor Agricultural Connections when distributing wholesale farmer products. COIC also surveyed local producers and purchased a variety of supplies to be utilized on-farm. Supplies needed differed by farm, but included: a Coolbot for Seed to Table educational farm to improve cold storage, and a variety of packing supplies to improve wholesale food safety standards. Pre and post surveys of product distribution techniques were captured as well as anecdotal information about how the supplies increased and improved wholesale markets.
2. COIC provided match funding for simple, state-of-the art on-farm washing stations to interested farmers. A total of three farms worked with COIC to develop wash station on site. Seed to Table worked with local youth development program, Heart of Oregon Youth Build (HOYB) program to design and construct a custom station. Juniper Jungle farm purchased a used commercial wash station to wash and process potatoes. Boundless Farmstead built a custom station, using new and recycled materials. Producers evaluated their wash station systems before and after usage, and also provided anecdotal information about the benefits of their new systems.

b. Impact on Community:

1. The supplies enabled Agricultural Connections to 1) safely transport multi-farm produce boxes in a professional, branded, clean and safe container and 2) transport locally grown produce in industry standard containers that can be branded, are stackable, and meet food safety protocol. The owner of Agricultural Connections estimates that these additional supplies increased food safety by as much as 75%. Seed to Table’s new Coolbot enabled them to convert a donated insulated trailer into an additional 640 cu ft of cold storage space, the only cold storage available on the farm. The trailer will be used to remove field heat and store produce before distribution, ensuring a higher quality of food safety. The new space also allowed for additional aggregation among local producers, as the new cold storage is also being utilized by a neighboring farm. A total of seven farms received assorted wholesale packing supplies: wax paper, paper cutters, and perforated bags for root crops, new non-wax boxes and box liners. All seven of the farms intend to scale up their production for wholesale in the 2018 growing season as a result.

2. All farms reported that the new and improved wash stations made a significant impact on their food safety, capacity, and volume for wholesale. With onsite facilities, the farmers no longer need to ship produce to a washing facility, reducing overall cost of production. Seed to Table estimated a 10% increase in production volume as a result of the new washing and stations on site. Boundless farmstead, in its first year of production, was able to secure new wholesale clients and meet food safety specifications without issue from the outset. All farmers reported increase on-farm efficiencies in time and labor.
- ii. Goal/Objective 2: Provide technical assistance to increase the capacity of farmers to scale from direct to wholesale markets.
- a. Progress Made:
    1. COIC and OSU conducted an independent qualitative needs assessment in the summer of 2016. The following summer, OSU extension met with producers one-on-one to follow up on the assessment and gather additional data. COIC and OSU then worked with Food4All, a local business developing a wholesale marketing platform to assist with beta model design, and co-authored a grant to help support further project development. In January of 2018, a SWOT analysis with specialty crop farmers was conducted with OSU Extension, OSU Small Farms and Community Food System, and COIC. COIC completed an analysis of common emergent themes.
    2. COIC intended to conduct a supply survey to compare against a 2014 demand survey, determining gaps and opportunities for producers. The supply survey would then be imported into an existing online portal to begin balancing supply and demand. However, COIC was approached by OSU to participate in a pilot project for the implementation of the new USDA local food economic assessment tool. This pilot project resulted in the *Economic Impact of Local Food* study. The study was overseen by OSU, and included bi-weekly meetings during survey implementation, analysis of results using IMPLAN, write and publish a report with the overall economic impact. COIC wrote a private foundation grant to pay for some of OSU's time and to perform outreach to governmental jurisdictions, with assistance from Rural Development Initiatives (RDI). LFPP funds were used to leverage the private grant.
    3. COIC and OSU provided support to producers utilizing the existing service support by OSU and given to COIC to implement.
    4. COIC worked with the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) to provide food safety workshops for the region focusing on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) in partnership with USDA and county regulations. OSU planned to provide a workshop on FSMA in the fall of 2017.
    5. COIC provided farmers scholarships to the annual OSU Small Farms Conference in Corvallis
    6. COIC conducted community outreach to local boards of directors and other local government officials to increase the regional understanding of the economic impact of local food on the agricultural sector.

7. COIC worked to develop collaborative producer model building on the 2015 farmer-established Crook County Small Farm Alliance (CCFSA).
8. COIC worked to develop a working regional co-op model for Central Oregon. COIC explored a co-op a potential model for farmers in a food hub. However, additional financial and community analysis deemed this model unfeasible, due to the limited interest of local producers in taking on a leadership or administrative role. COIC is now exploring a public-private partnership model for a regional food hub, partnering with Agricultural Connections to serve as operator of an expanded facility with shared-use aggregation, storage, and packing services.

b. Impact on Community:

1. See SWOT analysis.
2. COIC and OSU are utilizing the Economic Impact of Local Food assessment tool to determine the impact of small to mid-sized farmers and ranchers on the region. USDA has since asked COIC to be a case study based on our use of the Economic Impact Study model. COIC, in partnership with RDI and High Desert Food and Farm Alliance (HDFFA) developed a power point slide deck and storyboard of the Agricultural Economic Impact. The presentation was given to a variety of regional stakeholders. COIC also submitted an article to the Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development: <https://www.foodsystemsjournal.org/index.php/fsj>
3. The following workshops were carried out in 2017: Accessing and Addressing Barriers to Wholesale Markets (February); Beginning Farmer Workshop at the Living on a Few Acres Conference (March); Soil, Greenhouses and Funding workshop (November).
4. Unfortunately, neither ODA nor OSU followed through on delivery of these presentations before the end of the grant period. COIC was able to work directly with two wholesale farmers to produce food safety plans in accordance with the GAP checklist and standards.
5. COIC sent information about the scholarship opportunity to approximately 100 farmers, and published information in the OSU extension bi-monthly newsletter. Eight farmers inquired, five farmers were approved for scholarship, and four farmers ultimately attended the conference in 2016. In 2017, three farmers attended. COIC also provided two scholarships for the Central Oregon Living on a Few Acres Conference in March 2017.
6. COIC presented to the following groups and individuals:
  - COIC board of directors
  - Governor Brown's Regional Solutions Advisory Committee
  - Ecotrust
  - Oregon Community Food Systems Network
  - Crook County Commissioners
  - City of Bend Economic Development Council
  - Deschutes County Commissioners

COIC has also forged partnerships with a variety of local institutions, retail, and restaurants to cultivate an interest in local produce and protein sourcing. These include:

- 10 Barrel Restaurant
- Crook County School District
- Culver School District
- Redmond School District
- Central Oregon Community College
- Deschutes Brewery
- Facebook Data Center (Prineville)
- Market of Choice
- St. Charles Health System- Bend
- Whole Foods – Bend

7. COIC and HDFFA formalized a relationship CCSFA to provide fiscal management, consulting, and technical and promotional support for the Crooked River Open Pasture (CROP) on-farm events as funding allows. HDFFA also established a fiscal sponsorship with a group of producers in Jefferson County organizing new farm events called Educational Agricultural Tours (EATs). Both producer groups were asked to join HDFFA as an advisory group.
8. As part of the exploration of the co-op model, several farmers began working cooperatively to produce, market, and sell produce. COIC and HDFFA met with the farms to inform them of strategies and models for cooperative farming. COIC will continue to present this as an option for farmers to engage both each other and the community. However, there is limited interest at this time. COIC is pursuing development of a regional food hub, has formed an advisory board, and has three local producers currently serving in that role. The farmers will work cooperatively to identify public benefit services that the hub will provide to meet regional infrastructure and marketing needs for local producers.

iii. Goal/Objective 3: Provide necessary wholesale market supplies and services.

a. Progress Made:

1. COIC planned to integrate supply and demand data into an inventory model that will be used to streamline crop planning, forecasting and calendaring. In the end, the supply survey was morphed into an economic impact survey. Because the supply was coupled with confidential tax return information, specific data collected will not be made public.
2. Local food distribution company, Agricultural Connections, improved their aggregation and cold storage with technical and financial assistance from COIC.
3. Agricultural Connections explored options to move into a larger facility, with technical assistance from COIC.

b. Impact on Community:

1. Crop planning services based on the data collected in *the Economic Impact of Local Food* study will be implemented by OSU Extension's Small Farms Agent starting in 2017/2018.
  2. COIC and Agricultural Connections research and purchased a new air conditioner unit and insulated flooring and wall panels to expand cold storage from 50 to 94 square feet. COIC was also able to secure a non-profit grant to further expand cold storage capacity for winter squash, a stable crop of Central Oregon, in Agricultural Connections' current facility.
  3. COIC and Agricultural Connections are now working to create a regional food hub with expanded warehouse facility for increased storage (cold, freezer, dry), aggregation, processing, and packing services. Agricultural Connections will serve as the Hub operator during a 5 year public-private partnership agreement. We expect to move AgConnections into a larger warehouse facility in 2020.
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.
- i. Number of direct jobs created: 4 FTE
  - ii. Number of jobs retained: 7 FTE
  - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: cannot estimate
  - iv. Number of markets expanded: improved wholesale procurement through Agricultural Connections. Participating farmers reported the following market expansion:
    - a. Farmer 1
      1. 2017 \$30,000, 11+ vendors
      2. 2018 \$40,000
    - b. Farmer 2
      1. 2017 sells several tons of roots and hundreds of cases of greens through AgConnections
    - c. Farmer 3
      1. 2017 \$9,300, 3 vendors
      2. 2018 no new vendors, plans to increase sales by volume
    - d. Farmer 4
      1. 2017 20% of farm gate sales
      2. 2018 "always improving"
    - e. Farmer 5
      1. 2017 3,000 lbs of produce
      2. 2018 "will increase"
    - f. Farmer 6
      1. 2017: 500 lbs, 3 vendors
      2. 2018 will increase, one new vendor
  - v. Number of new markets established:
    - a. Three school districts
    - b. One community college
    - c. One university
    - d. Five restaurants
    - e. One large on-farm roadside stand

- vi. Market sales increased by:
    - a. 2014-15 increased by **46%**
    - b. 2015-2016 increased by **38%**
    - c. 2016-2017 increased by **87%**
  - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project:
    - a. 38 survey participants
    - b. 5 wholesale purchasing improvements
    - c. 5 scholarships to continuing education conferences
    - d. 3 farms received new washing stations onsite
    - e. 120 participated in sponsored workshops and conferences
    - f. 7 farms received wholesale packing supplies
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?
- 1) Low income students
    - a. COIC is working with OSU Cascades, the new 4-year university, which started feeding residents and professors in January 2017. The University started purchasing Central Oregon food from Agricultural Connections in the fall 2017.
    - b. COIC is working with the Central Oregon Community College and their food service contractor, Sydexo, to start purchasing farm direct and from Agricultural Connections in the fall 2017 and using educational materials provided HDFFA, to students about local food and eating seasonally. See appendix for educational materials.
    - c. COIC is working with 2 school districts (44 and 56% of students eligible for free and reduced lunch) to implement procurement practices that purchase locally grown food. In the 2016-17 school year hundreds of pounds of potatoes were purchased from one local farmer. In the 2017-18 school year schools are purchasing potatoes and now carrots farm direct.
  - 2) The majority of the farmers that we work with is considered low income and are socially disadvantaged.
4. Discuss your community partnerships.
- i. Who are your community partners?
    - a. OSU Extension
    - b. RDI
    - c. Agricultural Connections, LLC
    - d. High Desert Food and Farm Alliance (HDFFA)
    - e. Central Oregon Community College (COCC)
    - f. Regional School Districts (Redmond, Crook, Culver)
  - ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project?
    - a. OSU Extension
      - 1. Small Farms and Community Food Systems program is a key state-wide partner providing problem solving, educational materials, and personnel. Direct support for the Economic Impact Study.
      - 2. Agricultural Economist assisted COIC and HDFFA to implement the economic impact study.

3. Small Farms Agent was hired in February 2017 and has assisted with outreach to farmers, crop planning activities, on-farm technical assistance, and overall partnering on food system development.
      - b. Rural Development Initiatives partnered on the economic impact report, development of survey and outreach
      - c. Agricultural Connections provided wholesale sales info, distributed regional food, and coordinated with HOFFA and COIC to develop new markets and improve cold storage.
      - d. HOFFA has partnered on many of the grant objectives. See subcontractor section below.
      - e. COCC assisted with establishing procurement policies for local food, coordination of a meeting with OSU-Cascades, and establishing a joint bid for procurement services.
      - f. Redmond, Crook and Culver school districts worked with COIC to develop a joint procurement plan for local food. In 2016 and 2017, more than 1,500 lbs of potatoes and carrots were distributed via Agricultural Connections.
    - iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this LFPP grant?  
Most community partners are now working with COIC to build the regional food hub partnership with Agricultural Connections. Many currently serve on the Advisory Board.
5. Did you use contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project?  
COIC sub-contracted with HOFFA to perform the following:
  - Conduct economic impact surveys with producers
  - Assist with development of a wholesale food hub model and business plan
  - Coordinate with institutions to improve procurement of local food
6. Have you publicized any results yet?
  - i. If yes, how did you publicize the results?  
*The Economic Impact of Local Food* report was published in November 2017 with a corresponding press release.
  - ii. To whom did you publicize the results?  
COIC made presentations of the report to various governmental jurisdictions and regional stakeholders, and submitted an article to the Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development.
  - iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach?  
Cannot accurately estimate total reach. COIC made presentations to 7 regional stakeholder 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?
  - i. If so, how did you collect the information?

- a. Partner meetings: Weekly meetings with HOFFA; bi-monthly meetings with OSU Ag Economist, HOFFA, and RDI; monthly meeting with OSU Extension’s Regional Manager; monthly meeting with OSU center for Small Farms and Community Food Systems; regular meetings with Agricultural Connections.
  - b. Producer Feedback: periodic check-ins with participating farmers; producer needs survey; scholarship feedback; farmer supplies feedback (pre and post surveys, see above).
- ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?
- a. n/a
  - b. In the survey, farmers and ranchers were asked to indicate areas they needed help. They overwhelmingly expressed that they need continues assistance with marketing the local food supply as a whole and educating and expanding their individual customer bases. Farmers surveyed identified continued consumer education and market promotion as key driving force in continuing to expand opportunities. As farmers experience growing demand, they also said that they needed help with distribution, logistics of getting products to wholesale markets, and ways to connect with and access new markets.

Scholarship feedback (selection of total): I got a lot out the conference: 1) networking with other small farmers and livestock producers was invigorating and encouraging, 2) from the organic weed management talk I learned lots of practical methods that I will apply in our new USDA high tunnel 3) “Lean Farming”: I learned of ways to think about and hone in on eliminating waste of all types.

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

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).
  - a. Supply and Demand Survey morphed into an Economic Impact Study. By partnering with OSU Extension, we were able to leverage resources, including staff time, more efficiently and gained a much deeper/broader perspective on our desired data points. This study generated significant interest in the food hub project among many regional stakeholders.
  - b. E-Commerce platform. COIC originally planned to use an e-commerce platform to aggregate supply/demand data. After additional research, we determined that the platform was not suitable, as all data is tied to financial transactions. We did not find a viable alternative online platform to aggregate and track supply/demand data.
  - c. Farmer supplies. There were some challenges determining best supplies to purchase for farmers. We found that some additional training on the value of

wholesale packing supplies was necessary before the farmers could use these properly. We would recommend pairing supplies purchased with food safety/wholesale readiness training, especially for new and beginning farmers.

- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:
  - a. All objectives were met.
- 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:
  - a. We found that partnerships were key to achieving all objectives, but that partners did not always follow through. A great example is our planned food safety workshops with ODA and OSU. Time and capacity continue to be challenge. When our project manager had to take FMLA, we were fortunately able to subcontract some of the tasks to our non-profit partner, HDFFA, to complete all objectives.

#### 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.
  - a. COIC is currently pursuing the development of a regional food hub project. With support from USDA RBDG and the Ford Family Foundation, we in the process of completing a business plan via independent consultant. We have formed an advisory board with many of the community partners who participated in this project with us. The economic impact study in particular helped us move to this next stage of project development, by building a groundswell of interest among regional stakeholders interested in economic development. The study didn't just demonstrate how to meet market demand, but how to meet regional economic development needs by highlighting where money is "leaking out" of our regional economy via imported food (and the true cost of that impact). After presenting the study to a broad array of governmental jurisdictions, we found a broader base of support and additional community partners.
- 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?
  - a. *New Market Development: Protein.* Ecotrust's *Oregon Food Infrastructure Gap Analysis* showed that proteins are likely the most economically viable crop in Central Oregon. However, additional new market development is needed to assess local (Central Oregon) and statewide (Portland, Eugene) demand and potential wholesale buyers within these new markets.
  - b. *Additional qualitative research: focus groups with key buyer cohorts.* There is still a disconnect between buyer standards and producer packing and sizing protocols. Especially as we move into institutional wholesale markets, data on current demand and standards from key buyer cohorts would be helpful.