

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, 2015-September 29, 2017)</i>	September 30, 2015-September 29, 2017
Authorized Representative Name:	Dennis Morrow
Authorized Representative Phone:	503-542-4608
Authorized Representative Email:	dmorrow@janusyouth.org
Recipient Organization Name:	Janus Youth Programs, Inc.
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Village Gardens Produce Aggregation
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	15LFPPOR044
Year Grant was Awarded:	2015
Project City/State:	Portland, OR
Total Awarded Budget:	\$80,724

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: Kris Soebroto; Email: ksoebroto@janusyouth.org; Phone: 503-927-0820

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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 1: Increase/expand marketing capacity of diverse low-income small farmers/Market Gardeners.**

Objectives:

1. Trainings and technical assistance on bringing product to market with 5-10 immigrant farmers each year.
2. Coordinate Crop planning among participating growers and implement production plans.

- a. Progress Made:

A farm and business planning curriculum was finalized for the 2017 season and implemented for 10 Market Gardeners and youth farmers. The curriculum included workshops on crop and variety selection, farm mapping, a farm planting calendar, farm safety, tracking tool trainings, farmers market trainings, financial tracking, harvest and post-harvest handling, marketing and display support. Farmers also received one-on-one support as needed. Business planning and retail partner development was closely tied to farm planning from the earliest stages and helped with strategic plantings throughout the season. Tracking tools were created to help farmers plan their farms, make financial projections and track their revenue and expenses, which will be critical for planning in the coming years. Trainings and tracking tools were designed to be utilized by non-English speaking or low-literacy participants. Although an interpreter was present for all the workshops, it was important that the materials and tools created could be used without an interpreter present. Small farmers coordinated farm planning to ensure a wide variety of produce would be available from different vendors at the farmers markets.

- b. Impact on Community:

Post-season evaluation showed farmers reported improvement in 63% of curriculum areas surveyed. Often, Market Gardeners were the only farmers selling culturally specific vegetables for the African community and introduced these vegetables to a much broader audience than previously. Market Gardeners provided 8,800 lbs of fresh vegetables to customers during the 2017 season (up from 902 lbs in 2016). This increase in production was a direct result of the investment in farm planning and retail partner development that was prioritized in the off-season. Both farmers and customers benefited from the increased availability of fresh produce available for sale in the neighborhood.

- ii. **Goal 2: Connect local food businesses (restaurant, grocery stores, CSA customers) with fresh, locally grown produce.**

Objectives:

1. Develop and expand marketing outlets for produce sales.

a. Progress Made:

Over the grant period, youth and immigrant farmers connected to 5 new retail food businesses and expanded upon 3 existing connections to local food businesses/retail. A Marketing and Distribution Coordinator (MDC) was hired in early 2016 to initiate, coordinate and support new and existing retail partnerships for neighborhood-grown produce. The MDC developed retail-specific systems and procedures that could be adopted by farmers themselves regardless of language or literacy barriers. The MDC developed visual documents and forms that farmers and retailers could use to order and purchase fresh, seasonal produce. The MDC worked with each of the Market Gardener families to develop a marketing plan that helped to inform their farm planning. The MDC also worked with 10 youth farmers to help assess and prioritize the value of selling to farmers markets, grocery stores, through CSAs and direct to restaurants. The MDC was also able to ensure that farmers met the production and distribution targets established for the season with retail partners. Food Works youth sold \$33,991 of certified organic produce in 2016 and \$39,179 in 2017. Food Works youth expanded their CSA sales to 22 full-paying members and 15 subsidized shares reserved for low-income participants referred to the program by the County Health Center. Market Gardeners sold \$4,274 in 2016 and \$14,002 in 2017. This 69% increase in revenue was due to the addition of two established retail avenues (a mid-sized farmers market and a neighborhood grocery store) and 2 bulk purchases directly from consumers. Additionally, one Market Gardener had a niche market selling culturally specific produce (African eggplant and amaranth leaves).

b. Impact on Community:

An increase of retail and revenue-generating opportunities over the course of the grant period supported youth and adult farmers to grow more produce to meet an increased market demand. 8 retail avenues were able to sell Village Gardens organically grown produce from the Food Works youth and Market Gardener families. This increase in retail opportunities and subsequent ability to reach more customers directly translated to increased revenues for youth and adult farmers. The greater community also benefited from access to fresh vegetables often grown directly in their neighborhood. Increased sales and growth in customers ensures farmers are being compensated fairly for their work.

iii. **Goal 3: Improve quality, consistency, efficiency of distribution and purchasing from multiple growers.**

Objectives:

1. Collect and distribute produce throughout the season
2. Invest in equipment and supplies to improve harvest and post-harvest practices for participating growers.
3. Train producers in food safety and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)

a. Progress Made:

The Marketing and Distribution Coordinator (MDC) had a significant role in the collection and distribution of Village Gardens grown produce. The MDC was able to initiate new retail relationships and then ensure that produce was being delivered consistently and in a timely manner, while also maintaining good quality control. The MDC created standards for produce retail including harvesting, transporting, packing,

ordering, and invoicing practices. These standards are now a consistent set of expectations that can be used for future trainings and will be transferable to multiple retail locations. Wash stations were created to support healthy post-harvest practices for participating growers. Produce was then stored collectively by numerous farmers in an on-site, walk-in refrigeration system.

b. Impact on Community:

Creating consistency for the quality of harvest, packaging, marketing and retail display standards increased sales and income for youth and refugee farmers. These standards ensured produce arrived to markets fresh, vibrant and eye catching for customers. The standards also created a high level of quality that retailers and customers could come to expect from Village Gardens grown produce.

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: 50
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: 8
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: unknown
 - iv. Number of markets expanded: 3
 - v. Number of new markets established: 5
 - vi. Market sales increased by \$28,901 and increased by 54%.
 - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 50
 - a. Percent Increase: 60%

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?

The customer base was expanded by reaching new low-access customers, new retailers and expanding sales of culturally specific produce. Village Gardens distributed over \$24,000 in Veggie Vouchers from June – October of 2017. Veggie Vouchers could be used to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables with \$1,314 being redeemed by Village Gardens farmers at New Columbia Farmers Market and \$5,164 redeemed at St. Johns Farmers Market. This program significantly increased the number of low-income customers at the markets who could purchase from youth and Market Gardener farmers. One Market Gardener launched their business to a mid-sized farmers market to sell culturally specific produce. Customers from the African community followed the Market Gardener to this retail location and helped to grow the overall customer base of the mid-sized market.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.
 - i. Who are your community partners?
Metro, Home Forward, New Columbia Farmers Market, Mingala Market, Mama Pauline, Carribean Spice, New Seasons, North Portland Health, MESO, Adelante Mujeres, St Johns Farmers Market and St Johns Center for Opportunity.
 - ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project?
Metro provides free farm land for Food Works. Additional private land donors provide land for Market Gardeners. Home Forward provides in-kind donation of Village Market

space, where Village Gardens grown produce is sold, and supports the New Columbia Farmers Market. Mingala Market, Mama Pauline, Carribean Spice and New Seasons Market are retail partners for Village Gardens grown produce. North Portland Health Center recruits 10-15 low-income recipients for the CSA prescriptions share. MESO and IRCO provide training and business support. Adelante Mujeres partners on the development of a valued-added product to further increase sales of specialty-crop items grown by youth farmers. St Johns farmers market is waiving the fee for a Market Gardener to attend the market as a vendor. St Johns Center for Opportunity is helping to distribute Veggie Vouchers to support customers and farmer vendors.

- iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this LFPP grant?
Partners will continue to provide in-kind support, participate as retail locations and provide business development support.

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

We did not use contractors to do the work.

- 6. Have you publicized any results yet?* YES

- i. If yes, how did you publicize the results?
Results have been shared through social media, monthly enews and quarterly newsletters.
- ii. To whom did you publicize the results?
We publicize results to our community of supporters, participants and volunteers.
- iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach?
Stakeholders reached include 1,044 people through our email list, 1,444 people through Facebook, 430 people through Instagram, 417 followers on twitter for a potential audience total of 3,335.

*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?
Information was collected by comparing pre and post-season surveys of Market Gardener participants and youth farmers.
- ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?
Post-season evaluation showed that farmers reported, on average, an improvement in 63% of curriculum areas surveyed. Due to language barriers, the majority of feedback was provided through a multiple choice survey that was filled out with the help of an interpreter. This format, unfortunately, provided few comments. However, some available comments included:
"I knew I was giving back to our community and I knew it was going to be something positive."

“Learned how to pick foods, transplant, and how to cook”.

“At first it was challenging to figure out harvesting practices and knowing when to harvest.”

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?

The project generated income for Market Gardener families and for the Food Works youth farm program. The \$18,276 generated by Market Gardener families over the two-year grant period directly supplemented their household budgets. The \$73,170 generated by the 2.5 acre certified organic farm managed by Food Works youth went directly to the programming and helped to cover youth employment and materials for the farm (seeds, ammendments and tools).

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).
 - The Marketing and Distribution Coordinator position was crucial to creating a cohesive, thorough and easily understood farm/business planning curriculum. Having dedicated staff in this role provided much needed one-on-one support for farmers with language barriers. This position was also able to establish relationships with retail partners and create buying and selling tools that could be used across languages. Unfortunately, the position requires a specific skill set and required two rounds of hiring to find a fit for this position.
 - The investment in workshops and trainings did impact the ability for farmers to grow and sell more produce. A substantial amount of staff time went into developing a curriculum that allowed for many different learning styles and accommodated varied languages and literacy levels. This investment in an inclusive curriculum did generate more revenue for farmers and increased access to fresh vegetables for low-income customers.
 - The amount of dedicated staff time to support farmers with language barriers is significant and might not be sustainable. Being able to provide the same level of support to more participants would also be a challenging capacity demand for staff to meet.
 - More pre-planning needs to be done to achieve effective recruitment of farmer participants and to help ensure participants are committed and also are able to remove barriers which could affect their ability to participate consistently.
- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:

A strategic recruitment phase is crucial for program success. The investment of staff capacity is most effective when participants are able to commit to ongoing meetings/trainings/markets. Some participants were excited about the program but as

the season progressed, other work and family obligations kept them from participating fully and from being able to gain the most for the experience and available support. The program would have benefitted from clearly identifying an “ideal” participant and working with potential recruits to identify possible barriers to participation that might arise.

- 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:

Prior to hiring a Marketing and Distribution Coordinator, farmers were expected to come up with their own tracking tools for reporting pounds harvested and revenue. Through this process, the data and outcomes that were tracked were ineffective for accurate grant reporting. Simple, visual tools used to track and communicate outcomes will be a crucial component for measuring success and for farmers to forecast goals for the coming 2019 season.

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.

This project has laid the groundwork for future community goals. A cooperative garden model is the next iteration of this project as it will reach many more participants who will be able to share land and resources to generate income and feed their community. Village Gardens has a number of community based food initiatives including two community gardens serving 80 households, a community orchard with 40 fruit trees, and a chicken program with 17 laying hens. Community Leaders have begun to organize and develop a model to ensure sustainability for these programs that includes developing these initiatives as a cooperative with revenue generating potential. The business planning curriculum that was created during this grant period will be a foundation for the cooperative. Food safety and harvesting best practices will also create a quality standard for cooperative farmers. Village Gardens is also now practiced in identifying and building relationships with new retail partners. Although the work that Village Gardens was able to do with farmers one-on-one was effective, it was only effective for a small group of people who had to have the internal capacity to succeed. The cooperative model allows farmers to leverage each other as a resource and to be able to successfully implement a larger vision. The first phase of the cooperative will be to determine the structure/model and setting attainable sales goals for the coming season to cover the materials cost for the gardens, orchards and chickens. Long term, the cooperative could distribute generated revenue between working members and be a way to build community economic resilience and provide fresh produce in a low-access community.

- 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?

N/A