

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, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	April 1, 2017 – September 30, 2017	
Authorized Representative Name:	12/31/2017	
Authorized Representative Phone:	Maxson B Hence	
Authorized Representative Email:	401-255-7192	
Recipient Organization Name:	maxhence@aol.com , ayersfoundation@gmail.com	
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Ayers Foundation	
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	Hillandale Food Hub	
Year Grant was Awarded:	15LFPPRI0149	
Project City/State:	2015	
Total Awarded Budget:	Westerly, RI	
	78,329.00	

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: **Aggregate product from 6-8 food producers**
 - a. Progress Made: **At the time of completing its 2nd year project period, HFH is aggregating product from 10 partner farms/producers.**
 - b. Impact on Community: **Providing access to new markets for farmers and value-added producers and improved access to a wider selection of local, organic foods for 30 HFH wholesale customers (HORECA, Westerly School District) and burgeoning private retail customer base)**
 - ii. Goal/Objective 2: **Increase markets to include an additional 6 restaurants, 1 institution, 2 food deserts, and one farm store:**
 - a. Progress Made: **To date, an additional 6 restaurants have been added to customer base. First bid won and product sold to Stonington, CT School District and new bid submitted to New London, CT School District. Farm Store build-out has begun with the restoration of a historical foundation complete and deposit on timber frame made. In collaboration with the local Agway Store, Mobile market serving food desert(s) completed its first season in October, 2017; It’s noteworthy that collaboration with Feed the Streets USA will continue to provide the food to feed hundreds of food insecure and homeless people in 2017, not to mention building community and inspiring many along the way.**
 - b. Impact on Community: **It is still anticipated that the most noticeable impact on the community will be a result of the opening of farm store (in 2018) and the improved access to local and organic foods for residing and transient families. The mobile market will also substantially improve access for local, transient, and summer populations as well as for food insecure through on-board SNAP-enabled transactions.**
 - iii. Goal/Objective 3: **Expand educational offerings to serve an additional 250 people per year (reaching 1000).**
 - a. Progress Made: **Progress has been made, although quantity of 250 more students impacted each year not yet been achieved primarily due to school district budgets, college student enrollment, and program funding. With some new collaborations (both nutrition and wellness) now in place and new program funding secured, 2018 is looking very promising in terms of growth in level of participation. On the positive side, the number of repeat recipients/participants of/in our programming continues to go up due to programs like the TSCC Summer Camp, the Bradley School collaboration, as well as college and HS internships. Projects like “Project Wild,” where our staff members are training teachers, has also planted seeds that will continue to bear fruit for years to come.**
 - b. Impact on Community: **All of these programs and projects are based on collaborations that continue to grow and reverberate throughout the community. Hands-on experiential learning has been all but non-existent within our public educational system for decades and only recently resurfaced**

and been gradually reintroduced – Ayers Foundation and the Hillandale Food Hub have been a force that has helped this movement along, and students' response has been positive – not only in the retention of knowledge (as corroborated by testing) but also in helping to create an internal compulsion to learn – true inspiration. This phenomenon we have witnessed from preschool through collegiate levels with students showing up at partner farms and volunteering their time or simply taking a tour with their folks.

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: **1 (added new part-time employee in 2017)**
 - ii. Number of jobs retained: **6 (preserved all six created)**
 - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: 0 more
 - iv. Number of markets expanded: **Previously added and existing customers continue to increase purchasing, which is enabled nearly 50% sales growth in 2017 (over 2016)!**
 - v. **Number of new markets established: For HFH itself, 1 new institutional market, the Stonington School District.**
 - vi. **Market sales increased by \$75,000 dollars and increased by 100% since project inception.**
 - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project:
 - a. Percent Increase: **Since the inception of this project, the number of farmers/producers that have benefited from this project stand currently at 10, a 400+ % increase.**

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? **By adding 3 new businesses in the past 6 months, one of which is a new butcher shop, we have expanded our customer base. Although we've yet to commission farm store, we continue to supply two small retail outlets (in Avondale RI and Mystic, CT), which are not included in previous answers. And, beginning in June, we will be reaching low income/low access populations through co-branded Agway/HFH farmer's market.**

4. Discuss your community partnerships.
 - i. Who are your community partners? **Tower Street Community Center, Bradley School, Westerly School District, Chariho School District (NEW), Cranston School District (NEW), Westerly Agway (NEW), YMCA (NEW), The Goff School (NEW), Compass School, The Greene School, Saint Andrews Church, Johnson Wales University, UNFI, all 8 partner producers, Feed the Streets USA, and many of our restaurant customers who support our charitable work and host events, prepare foods, etc. All of these organizations collaborate and cooperate with Ayers and/or the HFH to further our collective missions and exert a positive impact on the communities we serve.**
 - ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project? **Our partnerships, helped by the new ones formed in the last (9) months, have expanded experiential education and increased awareness around the origin of healthy food, healthy economies, food security, nutrition, and wellness. By purchasing more and consistently through the Hub, support is also extended to the partner farms and other**

producers, as reported above. Cooperation with and donations to FTS USA has also fed over 500 food-insecure, and the new farmer's market in USDA designated food desert will significantly add to this charitable initiative, as will the Tower Street Community Gardens.

iii. How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this LFPP grant? **More of the same, as all of our true partners realize the power of a working, educational model and either practice it themselves or are happy to support it through collaborative efforts. With respect to the growth of the food hub, the cooperative and communal nature of this business is reflected in its sales growth and increase in partner farms. Additional incentives that are likely to include equity or a bonus (as a percentage of sales) will only be accretive to future performance.**

5. did you use contractors to conduct the work? If so, how did their work contribute to the results of the LFPP project? **For the most part, no. Our people are volunteers and in-house experts/professionals or part-time staff members. In some cases, like the construction of farm store, sub-contractors (e.g. mason, excavators, and HVAC) are hired. Three subs have been identified and to some extent already used in initial stages of farm store construction. Otherwise, for certain marketing materials, a print shop has been outsourced to for brochures, signage and other related tasks.**

6. Have you publicized any results yet?*

i. If yes, how did you publicize the results? **Newsletter**

ii. To whom did you publicize the results? **Ayers Foundation members**

iii. How many stakeholders (i.e. people, entities) did you reach? **~300**

*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? **YES**

i. If so, how did you collect the information? **Letters of Reference, Letters of Support, Word of Mouth, and personal experience.**

ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)? **Customers, customers' customers, and partners (HORECA, farms, schools, customers, churches, and other non-profit & community-based organizations) have provided praise for service, commitment, reliability, knowledge, and even quantified how their partnerships with the Hillandale Food Hub have impacted sales (food sold for partners - up as much as 100% - and quality of dining experience at customers' venues). The recurring collaborations and new ones now being formed (e.g. Chariho HS, Agway, Cranston, and recently Goff School (inner city)) speak volumes about our work. We also recently received a Letter of Support from RI's Lt. Governor Dan McKee recognizing Ayers and HFH's leadership, commitment, and results.**

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? **The gross sales during 2-year project period was in excess of 250,000. The gross profit during this period was approximately \$50,000. Costs include lease on delivery/aggregation van, labor to drive truck, insurance, cold storage, transportation fuel, and ancillary labor. The net income, while not yet finalized and reported, is anticipated to be ~\$5000 for the project period. These monies will most likely be passed back to the Ayers Foundation to support programming and general operating budget.**

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). **Lessons learned lie primarily in the difficulty of penetrating institutional markets. Given the layers of bureaucracy and corporatization of the institutional food industry, there are policies and price constraints that give little primacy to local and more nutritious foods. More advocating for local and organic foods at state and federal levels will be integral to a change in food policy and incentives conducive to purchasing local, healthy foods. On the positive side, the micro-local nature of our food hub builds community (both on the purchasing/aggregation and distribution sides) and helps contain costs (also on the aggregation and distribution sides), which collectively help to grow a profitable business.**
- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving: **Our goals (partner farms, program participants, customers, and sales) were met or exceeded. The lesson learned is iterated in section (i) above.**
- 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: **Improved billing, accounting, and traceability of all foods being sold through our food hub would have improved our end-of-year efficiency in reporting and analytics, the latter being important for improving mix products for sales in ensuing years.**

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 was based on a business plan that has a time horizon well beyond two years, and in fact, the HFH co-founders envisage their hub model as a standalone business that will ultimately generate far more profit than cofounders' current organic growing operation while still supporting that farm together with hub's other existing and future partners. Current sales projections are at \$250,000 by December, 2019 and \$500,000 by 2022. Additional jobs created are estimated at 3 in the course of the next 4 years, and they will most likely be in sales, logistics, and handling. 2-3 more partner farms will also most likely be added.**

- 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? **Following a well written and sustainable business plan while adapting it to unintended consequences and unforeseen circumstances is always wise. Investing time and money into educational programming that helps to change purchasing habits of adults while also cultivating the next generation of consumers will contribute significantly to the growth of small organic farms in the future and correspondingly any businesses that support and sell to them.**