

## 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](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> (e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)	October 1 2015 –September 29, 2017
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<b>Recipient Organization Name:</b>	Rhode Island Public Health Institute
<b>Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:</b>	Rhody Food on the Move- a new distribution system for local food
<b>Grant Agreement Number:</b> (e.g. 14-LFPPX-XX-XXXX)	15LFPPRI0157
<b>Year Grant was Awarded:</b>	2015
<b>Project City/State:</b>	Rhode Island
<b>Total Awarded Budget:</b>	\$99,979

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: Create mutually beneficial business relationships with at least 20 new local and/or regional food producers.**
    - a. **Progress Made:**
      1. We established a business relationship with Farm Fresh Rhode Island’s Market Mobile wholesale distribution business. This distribution system aggregates produce from over 75 farms in Rhode Island and surrounding states, offering streamlined purchasing systems to ensure the sustainability of our operations.
      2. We continued business relationships with seven major local and regional produce producers. These producers range in size, scope, and selection of produce.
      3. We used market sales data to determine baseline references for prices and volume of FOTM’s top-selling local and non-local produce. This has allowed us to evaluate price ranges and plan orders with local suppliers.
      4. For each local produce supplier, we have established a memorandum of understanding of quality standards, pricing, packing systems, delivery schedules, communications materials, invoicing protocol, and ordering systems.
      5. For each local produce supplier, we have developed signage to inform customers about the location, growing practices, and business history of the farms from which we are sourcing.
    - b. **Impact on Community:** Over the course of this project, we have engaged in contractual business relationships with seven suppliers including *Little City Growers*, a group of four urban farmers that aggregate produce weekly; *Boston Greens*, a hydroponic grower of herbs and cooking greens; *Freedom Food Farm*, a mid-size farm using organic growing practices; *West Bay Farm*, a small community farm that currently provides produce for the Rhode Island Food Bank; and *Southside Community Land Trust*, an organization that aggregates produce from community gardeners in four towns in Rhode Island. Southside Community Land Trust will aggregate directly from growers using urban community garden plots and home gardens. These growers are from the Hmong and West African immigrant communities and will be able to offer produce inventory to diversify the current items sold. We have also begun sourcing weekly deliveries of locally grown produce from Farm Fresh Rhode Island’s Market Mobile wholesale distribution business, which aggregates produce from over 75 farms in Rhode Island and surrounding states. We have sourced local produce from vendors on 187 occasions, resulting in \$10,224.87 in purchase orders to local farms and distributors.
  - ii. **Goal/Objective 2: Add at least 20 dairy, meat, fish, poultry and/or value added local food products to inventory.**
    - a. **Progress Made:**
      1. 151 local food products have been sourced and added to our sales inventory. These include leafy greens, root crops, fruits and berries, gourd crops, and ethnic produce including amaranth, purslane, bitter eggplant, molokhia, and other products.
      2. We finalized design for a fully refrigerated vehicle with two temperature zones to ensure shelf-life and food safety of produce. It will be in operation by September of 2017.
    - b. **Impact on Community:** We have established business relationships with seven local producers and a wholesale distributor that sources only locally-grown products. We have disseminated \$14,322.88 of locally-grown produce to shoppers during this period, including \$4,512.07 of produce to customers paying with SNAP/EBT and ‘Rhody Bucks’ SNAP incentives. We have sold local produce at all of our market sites throughout the winter.

**iii. Goal/Objective 3: Begin bringing at least 30 new markets per month with the second mobile market unit.**

**a. Progress Made:**

1. Even though a second mobile market unit has not yet been put into service, by expanding the use of the initial unit, we have brought Food on the Move markets to 51 different community locations since September 2015. In this period, Food on the Move has brought a total of 642 markets to 51 sites, reaching approximately 18,297 transactions.
2. Food on the Move instituted 3 new weekly markets since September 2015, increasing our frequency from monthly. This increases our impact at these community sites four-fold and increases our consistency and reliability for our customers.
3. We have hired and trained two additional market staff to support the increased number of markets.
4. Food on the Move leveraged \$57,000 of capital investment to retrofit our existing vehicle as a custom-built unit to improve the quality and efficiency of our operations. This investment includes full multi-temperature refrigeration and overnight storage capacity; this technology will enable us to better maintain produce quality during transit and decrease our reliance on overnight storage provided by commercial partners. This retrofit also includes custom-built steel shelving that will reduce our set-up and break-down time by 75%. We believe that this increased efficiency will allow us to increase our number of markets by 50% in the coming year.

**b. Impact on Community:** During this period, 187 markets have been held across twelve municipalities in Rhode Island. Markets have reached over 9,000 people across all sites. The market has disseminated over \$218,000 of produce across all sites since September 2015. Rhode Island residents have spent over \$11,529.82 in SNAP dollars at Food on the Move markets. Rhode Island SNAP users have used over \$48,500 in SNAP incentives to double their purchasing power of fruits and vegetables. Food on the Move invested \$57,000 with local vendors to design and fabricate a custom built market vehicle to better serve the needs of our state.

**iv. Goal/Objective 4: Launch a multi-pronged, statewide outreach, advertising and promotional campaign in collaboration with partner agencies**

**a. Progress Made:**

1. Food on the Move participated in a 12-week health and wellness “accelerator” program with the Social Enterprise Greenhouse in Rhode Island. This program provided intensive training on many aspects of small business development, including marketing and advertising. Food on the Move has begun the process of active market segmentation to better target our advertising dollars.
2. Food on the Move held a community outreach event to collect public comment on the Rhode Island Strategic Food Plan. This event was led by the state director of Food Strategy, at the William D’Abate Elementary School, one of our market sites. This event was covered by local media organizations including Rhode Island Public Radio (<http://ripr.org/post/ri-food-plan-tackles-food-insecurity-seeks-public-input>).
3. RIPHI has launched a new website and social media campaign to promote our scheduled mobile markets throughout the month. This website can be found at [www.riphi.org/food-on-the-move](http://www.riphi.org/food-on-the-move). Our social media campaign includes Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram platforms.
4. Each market site has committed to individually tailored outreach strategies and promotional campaigns for local residents and constituents. These strategies include site-specific flyers to promote each market, local newspaper and radio public service announcements, and auto-calls to residents of public housing sites; all of these outreach efforts help promote participation.

5. In this period, we expanded the capabilities of the TEXTUP service to be able to subscribe manually, allowing us to quadruple the number of subscribers we reach; we now reach 599 recipients through this program.
  6. We have developed a “vegetable of the month” campaign featuring seasonally-available locally-grown produce. This campaign features monthly recipes sent out with our email campaign, which has quadrupled in the past year months to reach 609 subscribers.
  7. We have partnered with Lifespan Community Health Institute and Johnson & Wales University to bring culinary students to the markets to offer cooking demonstrations. Through this partnership, Lifespan has also offered a ‘Food as Medicine’ cooking course for program participants. Food on the Move has also partnered with the Bristol Health Equity Zone, a local collaborative of cross-sector partners addressing community health, to offer further cooking demonstrations. In addition, we have collaborated with the Partnership for Providence Parks to bring a “smoothie bike” to our markets held at schools and communities serving young children. This bicycle is equipped with a “pedal power” blender which enables kids to make fresh fruit smoothies using locally grown produce—adding fun to nutrition education. Food on the Move has also partnered with Food4Good, a “mobile soup pantry” that provides free hot meals made with locally grown produce for all visitors to our weekly market in Olneyville, a low-income neighborhood in Providence, RI.
  8. Food on the Move coordinators and staff meet regularly with federal and local policymakers to promote and expand the program’s reach and impact.
  9. Food on the Move program coordinator Eliza Cohen has served for one year as a member of the Rhode Island Food Policy Council as a contributor to the policy committee. This body organizes policy campaigns to support local farmers and low-income eaters. As a result of this work, the council has taken up the initiative to propose a statewide bond focus on food systems for the coming year; this bond will include funding to support expanding Fruit and Vegetable incentives into retail settings.
- b. Impact on Community:** Food on the Move currently serves approximately 6500 unique customers per year; an increase from 5000 customers as a result of our social marketing and promotion efforts. In total, Food on the Move has held 49 cooking demonstrations, classes, and activities at our markets. All of these classes have emphasized locally-grown, seasonally-available 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: 4 new jobs have been created including market staff, program coordinator staff, program analysis and financial planning support, and program director position.
    - ii. Number of jobs retained: 5 market staff jobs have been retained.
    - iii. Number of indirect jobs created: This is difficult to quantify, but we believe our program has supported job growth with the TEXT UP company as well as the 20 market sites we serve; all of those partners dedicate time and effort to our program.
    - iv. Number of markets expanded: 20
    - v. Number of new markets established: 4
    - vi. Market sales increased by \$4,000 per month, representing a 50% increase since September 2016.
    - vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project: 29
    - viii. Percent Increase: 100%

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 expanding the amount of markets provided in RI's four Core Cities (cities where more than 25% of the children are living in poverty), Food on the Move has expanded the number of low income and ethnic communities served. We serve approximately 6,500 shoppers per year, the majority of whom live in food deserts and neighborhoods with high rates of food insecurity. Our data show 35% of market customers identify as Hispanic or Latino, 14% identify as African American, and 6% identify as American Indian. Another 10% are African immigrants. Approximately 80% of our shoppers are low-income women who live in food deserts who are shopping for their families. We serve a variety of sites, including low-income elderly and family public housing, schools, and community centers.

A Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grant has enabled us to double the value of SNAP dollars to make produce more affordable. After implementing this 'Rhody Bucks' program, the average market purchase increased by 30%. One local food supplier will continue to provide ethnic produce grown by Hmong and West African immigrant communities. This will increase the diversity of produce offered and will enable Food on the Move to reach customers from those and other communities seeking produce not commonly available at other produce markets.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

i. Who are your community partners?

We collaborate with community partners at the federal, state, municipal, and community level. Our federal partners include the United States Department of Agriculture, U.S. Senator Jack Reed, and U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse. Our state partners include Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo, First Gentleman Andrew Moffit, State Director of Food Strategy, the Rhode Island Department of Health, Rhode Island Department of Human Services, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management and Rhode Island Division of Agriculture, Rhode Island Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Rhode Island Interagency Food and Nutrition Policy Advisory Council, Rhode Island Food Policy Council, and the University of Rhode Island SNAP outreach office. Our food system partners include Wholesome Wave's National Nutrition Incentive Network (NNIN), the Mobile Market Network, the Mobile Market Community of Practice, and Farm Fresh Rhode Island. Our philanthropic partners include the American Association of Retired Persons Foundation (AARP Foundation), Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island, and the Rhode Island Foundation. At the municipal level, we work with the City of Providence's Mayor's Healthy Communities Office and the City of Pawtucket. We also partner with the Public Housing Authorities of the cities of Central Falls, Coventry, Pawtucket, West Warwick, Woonsocket, and Providence, all of whom host markets at family and elderly housing sites. We partner with the Providence and Pawtucket School Departments, who also serve as market host sites. Community partners include the Brown University School of Public Health, Rhode Island Healthy Schools Coalition, Blackstone Valley Community Action Program, Blackstone Valley Community Health Centers, Providence Community Health Centers, Progreso Latino, African Alliance of Rhode Island, and Thundermist Health Centers.

ii. How have they contributed to the overall results of the LFPP project?

These individuals and organizations have been active partners in the planning and implementation of the mobile market program. They have supported our project by providing non-federal resources such as staff time, printed materials for outreach, and space for markets and community forums. They have also helped us leverage over \$1 million in long-term funding for capital investments, program costs, and fruit and vegetable incentives.

During this period, we began a new partnership with the Rhode Island Health Equity Zone (HEZ) initiative, funded by the Rhode Island Department of Health and the Centers for

Disease Control (CDC). The (HEZ) initiative uses a place-based approach to improving population health. Each geographic area works with the Department of Health in a multi-disciplinary collaborative to address the social determinants of health for each community. Through HEZ collaboratives, Food on the Move works with partner organizations to host, promote, and gather feedback on our mobile markets. This partnership strengthens our connection to local organizations and allows us to build grassroots support for the program through longtime presence in the communities we serve. (For HEZ information, see <http://www.health.ri.gov/projects/healthequityzones/>)

How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this LFPP grant?

These individuals and organizations will continue to provide their expertise and support through their time and non-federal resources.

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

We worked with three trailer maintenance companies and one shelving company to fabricate and maintain our vehicle and equipment, paid for with non-federal resources.

6. Have you publicized any results yet?\*

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

We broadly publicize program results in the popular media, including radio, print journalism, and online publications. We have also been featured in several online profiles by the Rhode Island Department of Health and the Rhode Island Food Policy Council describing our work promoting healthy food access in the state. We publicize sales and other impact data (including number of customers served, numbers of SNAP dollars spent, number of markets held) in ongoing reports both in the form of presentations to general audiences and with the leaders of each market site. We share best practices with other mobile markets through the Mobile Market Network, convened by Arcadia in Washington DC, and the Mobile Market Community of Practice, convened by the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance. We share best practices from our SNAP incentive program through Wholesome Wave's National Nutrition Incentive Network (NNIN) and with our community partners, Farm Fresh Rhode Island. We participate in national and regional conferences through the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (NESAWG) and Food Solutions New England (FSNE). We also have begun the process of drafting three scientific articles that will describe the impact of our program and advocate to scale our innovative solutions to larger populations.

- ii. To whom did you publicize the results?

In this grant period, we publicized results to all of the aforementioned community partners, including federal, state, and local policy makers. We publicize program results in community forums such as meetings for public health researchers and practitioners, as well as directly with each market site.

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

We have held several community events related to this effort, some of those have received media coverage. We have also widely disseminated the results of our program to the Rhode Island Department of Health as well as the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management. We believe that we have reached several hundred key stakeholders in Rhode Island and beyond. We have reached thousands of individuals through the popular media.

\*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?

We have collected feedback in three primary ways: 1) Meetings with key site leaders to continue with ongoing collaboration on our program's implementation and evaluation strategies, 2) a cross sectional survey conducted with market customers to measure actual and perceived impact on food access and consumption, and 3) ongoing dialogue between our project director and coordinator with each market site director. We plan to collect new feedback through a survey implemented in the winter of 2018 that will include feedback on the market's impact on food access and health outcomes.
  - ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?

In November and December 2015, RIPHI staff conducted exit interview surveys with 250 SNAP market shoppers. These surveys included demographic questions as well as questions about survey participants' impressions of the markets; Preferences about local and culturally appropriate food items; fruit and vegetable consumption patterns; food shopping patterns; and places they usually shopped for food. Our survey also asked about food expenditures, including how much participants usually spend on food at our markets and at other stores, as well as questions about our program that doubled the value of SNAP benefits. We also included questions about what residents believe would be the appropriate amount of financial incentive to induce changes in food purchasing and consumption behaviors. These surveys demonstrate participants' desire for increased access to local food. 79.5% of participants reported that it was somewhat or very important that the fruits and vegetables they eat are locally grown. Many people wrote that locally grown produce was one of their favorite parts of the Food on the Move market and that it was the reason they switched to Food on the Move as their primary choice when buying produce. We look forward to selling increasing amounts of local food as the growing season begins.
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  
If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award? During the project reporting period, the gross amount of \$218,475.12 was generated in income through the sale of produce. The income was used to purchase produce for sale as well as myriad market small item supplies that were not grant-funded.
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).

Our project model has changed significantly since we began this award. First, we learned that although we could find slightly better wholesale prices working directly with local farms, that it was far more cost-effective to source through a local food hub. We had access to the same farm products, and although we did pay a surcharge to use this sourcing, it reduced stafftime needs to manage a complicated multi-farm supply chain. This was especially true because of the tight transportation timetable of a mobile market with a variable schedule.

Second, we learned that culturally relevant fruits and vegetables had a far wider appeal than we had initially predicted. One major focus of our market is providing fresh fruits and

vegetables that are native to the first homes of our diverse immigrant populations. Many of these crops are being grown locally in RI by immigrant growers. However, as we expanded our inventory of these items, we were surprised by how popular they became among customers who did not have a family connection to those areas; customers looking to try something new purchased these culturally-specific vegetables in high numbers, and we began to source them for all of our markets.

Third, we learned that cooking demonstrations featuring locally grown vegetables were extremely popular, increasing both sales and participation; it also provided an opportunity to deepen our relationship with customers as we talked with them about the different foods being prepared, and traded new recipe ideas. We worked with local culinary students to offer these demonstrations, making this a very low-cost but effective method of nutrition education and marketing.

- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:

Instead of adding meat, fish, and dairy to our offerings, we instead focused on an increased diversity of fruits and vegetables sourced from local vendors. This enabled us to simplify our permitting requirements, as well as focus our education on plant-based recipes. It also streamlined our supply chain and purchasing relationships as it narrowed our vendor list; this enabled us to build longer-term relationships with vendors.

We also decided to focus on increasing the retrofit build of our existing vehicle, rather than investing in a second vehicle at this time. This allowed us to greatly increase the quality of our produce storage and the efficiency of our setup and cleanup time for each market. Long term, we still hope to invest in a second vehicle; however, this investment allowed us to add additional market capacity without adding staff time, which would have been prohibitively expensive with a second vehicle.

- 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:  
See above.

#### 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.

We hope to increase the percentage of sales from 10% to 15% locally-sourced in the coming year. This will result in an additional \$7,000 annually in local food sold. We also recently hired a nutrition outreach and local food purchasing coordinator staff member, creating one new job and increasing the activities provided at the market related to local food. We anticipate a 25% increase in sales in the coming year due to improvements in our produce storage and operations efficiency. We will continue sourcing from all current supply chains for the foreseeable future.

- 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?

We are currently beginning a large-scale multi-year evaluations that will analyze the market's impact on shoppers' health outcomes. Long-term, we hope to be able to quantify the healthcare system savings due to improved nutritional outcomes, and use those savings to invest further in food access programs that prioritize locally produced fruits and vegetables.