

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 LFPP staff to avoid delays:

LFPP Phone: 202-720-2731; Email: USDALFPPQuestions@ams.usda.gov; Fax: 202-720-0300

Report Date Range:	September 15, 2014 – September 14, 2015
Authorized Representative Name:	Kristi Luzar, Executive Director
Authorized Representative Phone:	(414) 562-9904
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Recipient Organization Name:	Urban Economic Development Association of Wisconsin, Inc. (UEDA)
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	SE WI Food Sector as an Economic Development Vehicle & Connector to Local Food
Grant Agreement Number:	14-LFPPX-WI-0184
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Milwaukee, WI
Total Awarded Budget:	\$34,300 (Grant of \$25,000)

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.

Goal/Objective 1: Distill lessons about effective practices from the experiences of nonprofits and other enterprises engaged in operating commercial kitchens and food systems work. Identify areas of synergy and surface challenges.

- a. Progress Made: In September we completed the analysis and review of secondary data, background information, survey responses and interview summaries from a group of nonprofit and private/social enterprise kitchen operations. This information was used to draft a final summary report and presentation, which was shared with those invited to participate and others active in the *Food Enterprise Development Network (FEDN)*.
- b. Impact on Community: The information we collected through the feasibility analysis has been very helpful in terms of adding new synergy and direction to the FEDN Entrepreneur workgroup as we plan for 2016 activities, as well as engage funders and new partners in the work to strengthen economic development activities in southeast Wisconsin's local food sector. Additionally, the project's process has helped us connect those operating commercial kitchens with each other, as well as with food entrepreneurs as they shared challenges and successes through the two feedback sessions hosted by UEDA and Forward Community Investments.

Goal/Objective 2: Identify strategies to increase the use of local sourcing by food entrepreneurs and processing entities and examine the sector's viability for creating employment opportunities for the hard-to-employ.

- a. Progress Made: Through the feasibility analysis process, we uncovered a lack of infrastructure (similar to that in other sectors such as housing or small business support) that helps foster and strengthen connections between and among entrepreneurs, those operating kitchens and/or processing facilities and local farmers, even though all three groups experience challenges similar to operating a small business. For those providing employment and workforce training for the hard-to-employ, the funding and support resources needed to do that work effectively are significant and we recommend that funders consider multi-year support or other strategies to invest in that work. Lastly, our analysis showed that it takes a minimum of 3-5 years for food-related economic development programs and activities to become financially stable; thus long-term funding strategies should be sought to support them.
- b. Impact on Community: Through the summary report and outreach sessions we shared our findings, asked for additional feedback and worked with participants to finalize strategies and recommendations. Additionally, the final report includes a nonprofit capacity assessment tool that will be shared widely with UEDA's and the FEDN network, so it can be used by organizations to make an initial determination of whether they should incorporate food-related economic development activities into their programs and/or projects. Lastly, we are using the strategies identified in the feasibility analysis to strengthen the work of the FEDN Entrepreneur workgroup in 2016.

Goal/Objective 3: Disseminate findings through networking events targeted to nonprofits and local food entrepreneurs.

- a. Progress Made: Once the final summary report and analysis was completed in September, we held two outreach sessions in Milwaukee and Madison, WI to share our findings. All who were invited to participate in the survey, as well as active members of the FEDN project, local funders, staff at local and state government and other partners were invited to attend the feedback sessions. We prepared a presentation and discussed their reaction and feedback, incorporating that information into the final summary report, one-page snapshot and nonprofit capacity assessment tool.
- b. Impact on Community: The outreach sessions not only provided the research team at UEDA with helpful feedback that allowed us to finalize recommendations and strategies, but allowed us to form important connections with those operating kitchens, in local government and food entrepreneurs in both Milwaukee and Madison, WI. Additionally, the results of the feasibility analysis and recommendations will be used to guide UEDA's work in 2016 with the FEDN Entrepreneur workgroup and activities to support the local food entrepreneurship community.

2. Quantify the overall impact of the project on the intended beneficiaries, if applicable, from the baseline date (the start of the award performance period, September 30, 2014). Include further explanation if necessary.

- a. *Number of direct jobs created:*
- b. *Number of jobs retained:*
- c. *Number of indirect jobs created:*
- d. *Number of markets expanded:*
- e. *Number of new markets established:*
- f. *Market sales increased by \$insert dollars and increased by insert percentage%.*
- g. *Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project and percent increase:*

As a feasibility analysis, this project was not designed to track outcome impacts as those listed above. The results of this project included work products such as:

- Final summary report that distills lessons and provides recommendations for practitioners, funders and local government;
- One-page "snapshot" of the findings from the feasibility analysis;
- Capacity assessment tool for nonprofit organizations;
- Content for a workshop to present findings; and
- Outreach and networking events to share findings and tools.

However, our intent with this project is that with this information, organizations and others interested in using the food sector as an economic development vehicle will be able to implement effective programs and/or activities that impact the above metric areas over time (i.e. jobs created, markets expanded, sales increased, new connections to local farmers and producers, etc.).

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?

Yes. UEDA leveraged current partners and local food entrepreneurs active in the FEDN project to reach new organizations located in minority and low-income neighborhoods in the City of

Milwaukee and active in the Madison area. We connected with them via the outreach/feedback sessions, as well as through the survey and interview process. We expect to build on these new connections (particularly with commercial kitchen operators) in 2016.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

a. Who are your community partners?

Members of the *Food Enterprise Development Network (FEDN)*, which include City of Milwaukee Department of City Development, Mighty Fine Foods LLC, Sustainable Edible Economic Development (SEED), That Salsa Lady, UW-Extension Community & Regional Food Systems Project, UW-Extension Urban Agriculture and Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corp. (WWBIC) and local food entrepreneurs.

Organizations such as Alice's Garden, Center for Resilient Cities, Forward Community Investments (FCI), Milwaukee Food Council, Milwaukee Northside Food Network and State of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Consumer & Trade Protection (DATCP) have also been active participants with UEDA and FEDN in various ways.

b. How have they contributed to the results you've already achieved?

By planning activities designed to support food entrepreneurs, and through that process, our community partners provided feedback during all phases of the feasibility analysis, including survey design, beta-testing, data collection and analysis, outreach and strategy identification.

c. How will they contribute to future results?

Their continued participation in the FEDN project in 2016 will assist us in strengthening the work that has occurred over the past two years with the findings from the feasibility analysis, particularly in identifying ways to develop and support an infrastructure that provides important connections for those launching food-based businesses, operating kitchens, processing facilities and local farmers/food producers.

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

Yes. The contractor is a highly skilled researcher, analyst and program designer. Her work contributed substantially to the results achieved throughout the feasibility analysis process by taking the lead in designing the survey, identifying and reviewing secondary data sources, performing the analysis of the survey and interview results, drafting the summary report and developing content for the outreach/feedback sessions. She was an integral part of the UEDA team as we worked on this project over the past year.

6. Have you publicized any results yet?*

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

b. *To whom did you publicize the results?*

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

**Send any publicity information (brochures, announcements, newsletters, etc.) electronically along with this report. Non-electronic promotional items should be digitally photographed and emailed with this report (do not send the actual item).*

Initial findings/results were presented in two outreach sessions in November (Milwaukee, WI) and early December (Madison, WI). All who were invited to participate in the survey, active members of

the FEDN project, local funders, staff at local and state government and other partners were invited to attend the feedback sessions. The information collected at these sessions assisted us in finalizing the summary report and assessment tool.

The final summary report, one-page snapshot and nonprofit capacity assessment tool were finalized in mid-December and are posted on both the UEDA and FEDN websites at www.uedawi.org and <http://fednmke.wordpress.com/>. We will also announce their availability in January 2016 via an annual email update to UEDA's contact database (1,300 people), the FEDN Network (an additional 200 people) and via social media on [UEDA's Facebook page](#) and the [FEDN Facebook Group](#).

A copy of the one-page snapshot and assessment tool are included with this final summary report (see pages 8-10). Due to the length of the full summary report, we have posted it on our website, which can be accessed [by clicking here](#).

7. Have you collected any feedback from your community and additional stakeholders about your work?

- a. If so, how did you collect the information?
- b. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?

Yes, as described earlier in this report, UEDA hosted two outreach sessions with stakeholders. Throughout the project's duration, feedback was also collected via email or through group discussion at meetings. This included suggestions of additional participants for the survey, questions/subject areas to include and how to further develop strategies/recommendations that will assist those using the food industry as an economic development tool.

8. Budget Summary:

- a. 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 (*as a separate attachment*):
- b. Did the project generate any income? No
If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award? N/A

9. Lessons Learned:

- a. Summarize any lessons learned. They should draw on 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).
 - Having an established network of individuals and organizations active in the food / economic development sector was extremely helpful in terms of outreach, feedback and testing the survey. It assisted UEDA's project team throughout the process in terms of ensuring that the questions we were asking were the right ones, and that we were able to gain information on the wide variety of food-based activities undertaken by organizations.
 - This also allowed us to make important connections between the ongoing work of FEDN with food entrepreneurs, nonprofit and/or for-profit entities operating kitchens and efforts to support the development of small-scale urban farmers/growers.
 - While the ability to disseminate an electronic survey (and a robust one at that) as helpful, we realized that we still needed to conduct interviews to clarify responses, gain additional

insights or ensure participation by entities we knew would add valuable information to the feasibility analysis.

- Upon reflection, we realized that the survey instrument was perhaps too detailed and lengthy. We would most likely design it slightly differently by combining certain questions areas for the sake of time and/or efficiency.
 - Lastly, as with most projects, certain tasks took longer than anticipated (such as survey design, follow-up and outreach) so we would plan more adequately for that in the future.
- b. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving: N/A
- c. Describe any lessons learned in the administration of the project that might be helpful for others who would want to implement a similar project:

While we felt that we achieved the goals/objectives of the feasibility analysis initially described in the project application, the following activities or processes were helpful throughout implementation:

- Development of a detailed workplan, with tasks assigned to specific team members.
- Regular check-ins with the consultant and other project team members.
- Utilization of ongoing activities in FEDN to assist with outreach and guide stakeholder feedback throughout the data collection and analysis process (in particular by engaging active workgroup members with various areas of expertise).
- Incorporation of in-person feedback sessions where we presented initial findings and analysis (this assisted us to finalize recommendations as well as identify ways to carry the work forward).

10. Future Work:

- a. 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.

UEDA plans to take the recommendations in the final summary report and integrate them into the 2016 workplan for the *Food Enterprise Development Network (FEDN)* project. In particular, the realization that food entrepreneurs, nonprofit and/or for-profit entities operating kitchens and small-scale urban farmers/growers all face challenges similar to those experienced by small business owners, has allowed us to identify other technical assistance resources and partners in UEDA's membership network that are normally not connected to the local food sector. In 2016, we plan to utilize the feasibility analysis to demonstrate the need for this infrastructure and identify ways to leverage these resources to help further support the economic growth of these three groups.

- b. 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?

As stated in the concluding remarks of the summary report, the feasibility analysis raised explicit questions about how efforts to use the food industry as an economic development vehicle can go without the kind of infrastructure and support that are currently prevalent in other community development sectors such as housing or other social justice-oriented fields. How can the current technical assistance infrastructure housed in the USDA around local food production and promotion be better connected to economic development activities such as operating food hubs, commercial kitchens and micro-entrepreneurs that develop and bring to market value-added products?

Lastly, our study also raised implicit questions about the how well suited the food industry is as a target for job placement for the hard-to-employ. We feel it would be worth exploring whether or not those who obtain entry level positions in the food industry are able to use this a stepping stone into higher-paying jobs in this or other industries, or how this work adds value to other objectives such as providing sustainable operating support to nonprofit-based food enterprises; assists the hard-to-employ in other areas of life such as the ability to live independently, provide long-term employment, etc.; and fulfills other mission areas for organizations that choose to undertake food-based ventures.

See pages 8-10 for images of the One-page Study Snapshot and Nonprofit Capacity Assessment Tool

Food as an Economic & Workforce Development Tool: Findings from an Exploratory Feasibility Study

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Across the country there is a growing convergence of interests among community stakeholders and local food systems around the use of the food sector as a vehicle for economic development. This provides a unique window of opportunity to meet several socio-economic and workforce development goals simultaneously.



Between September 2014 and September 2015 the Urban Economic Development Association of Wisconsin and consultant, Karen Fulbright-Anderson, identified a cross section of organizations that were using the food industry as a workforce and/or economic development tool; designed and implemented a survey of the leadership of these organizations; and conducted interviews with a subset of these leaders. This document is an overview of findings.



BACKGROUND OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Outreach & Survey Efforts

Contacted 50 nonprofit and for-profit organizations in the food sector engaged in economic and workforce development activities

Surveyed 17 of these organizations & conducted interviews with a subset of respondents



Survey Cohort

53% from nonprofits, 35% from for-profit, 12% from hybrid or social enterprise ventures

80% were located in Wisconsin

Most were engaged in multiple activities related to the food industry



What They Do

- 65% operate commercial kitchens that rent space
- 47% train clients in food industry and related skills
- 47% promote nutrition and wellness in underserved communities
- 41% operate a restaurant/catering business
- 35% produce/sell food items to generate revenue
- 35% train clients to develop a food-based business
- 35% link local farms to outlets for their products



Who They Serve

- Food entrepreneurs (71%)
- Women (65%)
- Single Parents (59%)
- People with physical and/or cognitive disabilities (53%)
- Workers over the age of 50 (53%)
- Youth from high-risk environments (47%)
- African-American males (47%)
- Low-income individuals (12%)
- Homeless individuals (5%)
- Immigrants (5%)
- Latinos (5%)
- Veterans (5%)
- Surrounding Community (5%)



What They Could Do

With increased Capacity & Resources, participants stated they could:

- Assist clients with finding jobs in the food industry
- Provide additional training in food industry-related skills
- Develop and operate a commercial kitchen that co-packs for food entrepreneurs



Food as an Economic & Workforce Development Tool: Findings from an Exploratory Feasibility Study

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

While there are larger-scale efforts to support the food industry and entrepreneurs, it is still challenging for local nonprofits, government and other partners to accurately assess whether southeast Wisconsin's food sector can adequately serve as an economic and workforce development vehicle and enhance existing connections to local food producers.

Our findings indicate that while this is a promising tool that can meet several social and economic justice goals, efforts need to be made to further develop the kind of infrastructure and support that history has shown is needed to make progress in the community and economic development field.

BREAKDOWN OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

Skills Needed for Success

Food safety knowledge

Sales & marketing skills

Facilities & project management skills

Business skills such as accounting, financial forecasting, and meticulous record-keeping

Human resources such as skilled & reliable staff with a culinary and/or food science background



Where Challenges Arise

Balancing operational costs with the need to be affordable for clients

Generating sufficient income to offset expenses

Staff reliability and sustainability

Long-term funding sources for workforce training



Where Support is Needed

Access to affordable financial resources such as grant funds and low-interest loans

Technical support such as business planning, marketing, accounting services, fund development

Access to and ability to connect with others engaged in similar operations to share best practices, have open conversations and troubleshoot

Understanding by funders and supporters that it takes an average of 3-5 years for a food-based enterprise to become established on firm financial footing



RECOMMENDATIONS

Further develop and build an infrastructure that leverages economies of scale for activities that utilize the food industry for economic and workforce development

Identify and implement cost-effective solutions to address challenges related to distribution, purchasing, marketing, financing and technical assistance

Provide consistent, multi-year funding to intermediaries and/or nonprofits that focus on the hard-to-employ

Consider providing program-related investments and/or bridge funding to organizations engaged in this work

Connect those operating nonprofit-based food enterprises with technical assistance resources that support small businesses as the challenges experienced by both are similar

Further develop the support system that connects those operating nonprofit-based food enterprises, micro-level food entrepreneurs in the value-added space and local farmers to each other and technical assistance resources

Prepared by the Urban Economic Development Association of Wisconsin, Inc. (UEDA) December 2015
This project was made possible by the Local Food Promotion Program managed by the Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, in addition to matching funds from Forest County Potawatomi Foundation. Access the full report at www.uedawi.org.

NON-PROFIT CAPACITY ASSESSMENT TOOL

A resource for organizations looking to use
Food as an Economic & Workforce Development Tool



Information generated through a 2014-15 feasibility study conducted by the Urban Economic Development Association of Wisconsin, and consultant Karen Fulbright-Anderson suggests that non-profits would benefit from a process that examines their capacity to incorporate the food sector in economic and workforce development activities.

The following questions are not intended to be exhaustive but rather illustrative.

CONCEPTUALLY: *What is the organization's theory of change?*

1. What is the organization's ultimate goal when it comes to integrating the food sector and economic development activities?
2. Is the organization's ultimate goal in sync with the activities in which it wishes to engage?
3. What barriers might the organization encounter and how will they be addressed?
4. What opportunities are available to support and align this work and how can they be accessed?
5. What methods will they use to evaluate their success? Will activities to be mission-centric, a source of financial sustainability, or both?

FOOD INDUSTRY: *What knowledge is needed?*

1. Does the organization have an accurate assessment of the demand for its proposed products (e.g. commercial kitchen rental space, workforce training slots, and food products for market...)?
2. Does the organization have sufficient understanding of the local, state and federal rules and regulations that apply to their proposed food sector activities (e.g. licensing requirements, food safety requirements, etc.)?
3. Does the organization have a good understanding of the multiple components that need to be addressed when working in the food sector (e.g. processes for gaining access to markets for their products, labeling and food packaging, distribution, marketing, etc.)

FINANCIAL: *What knowledge and resources are needed?*

1. Does the organization have an accurate assessment of the costs associated with the type of food based work they wish to do?
2. Does the organization have financial resources to cover the 3-5 years that it may take for their work to be financially sustainable?
3. Does the organization have the financial resources to hire and retain staff skilled in the areas needed to do this work?
4. Does the organization have relationships with grant and loan sources to ensure adequate financial support for the project?

HUMAN RESOURCES: *What capacities and skills are needed?*

1. Does the organization have access to personnel or partners who have the capacities and skills needed to carry out this work? Depending on the activities in which the organization wishes to engage, these could include a combination of the following: culinary; food science; teaching and/or training; personnel management; facilities management; time management; project management; financial management; business planning; sales; marketing; distribution; accounting, marketing; grantsmanship; research and development; and knowledge of local, state and federal codes and regulations.
2. Does the organization have relationships with or networks and connections to farmers, potential volunteers, and retailers, wholesalers, institutional or other markets that could be outlets for their products?

PHYSICAL: *What type of infrastructure is needed ?*

1. Does the organization have broad access to production facilities in desired locations? Does the space have room for growth?
2. Does the organization have year-round outlets for its products?
3. Does the organization have access to the commercial grade equipment needed for the type of activities in which it wishes to engage?
4. Does the organization have access to affordable, high quality suppliers?

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