

Farmers' Market Promotion Program (FMPP) – 2014 – **Excellent Example**  
**PROJECT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE FORM**

7. **Executive Summary** (200 words or fewer):

██████████ works to advance farmers markets to create a thriving marketplace for local food and farm products. Thriving farmers markets lead to increased consumption of and access to locally and regionally produced agricultural products and therefore support the Farmers' Market Promotion Program (FMPP) goal. ██████████ plans to support both the ██████████ and FMPP mission through its proposed project ██████████. The project goals are to: (1) develop a farmers market manager mentorship program, (2) improve and expand ██████████ Market Manager Certificate Program, and (3) build ██████████ capacity. The farmers market manager mentorship program will begin with developing a framework for the new program in October 2014 and close after the 2016 farmers market season. The expanded ██████████ will begin in October 2014 with educational planning and close with the publication of a program evaluation by September 2016. ██████████ capacity building will begin in March 2015 with strategic planning and close with the release of ██████████ 2015-2020 strategic plan by July 2015. The project will result in enhanced skills, knowledge, and expertise of those whose work serves farmers markets across ██████████ and the ██████████.

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9. **Goals of the Project:**

The ultimate goals and objectives of the project are to expand and promote direct producer-to-consumer opportunities through training, education and networking programs for the people who are integral to the sustainable growth of farmers markets in ██████████ and the ██████████. With enhanced skills, knowledge, and expertise, these individuals and organizations will support increased consumption of and access to locally and regionally produced agricultural products through the creation of vibrant marketplaces.

Goal #1: To **develop a farmers market manager mentorship program** that offers training and technical assistance to beginning market managers in order to assist and support them in the development, improvement, and expansion of farmers markets

- Objective 1: Develop clear expectations for farmers market manager mentors and mentees to be shared during the 2015 ██████████
- Objective 2: Engage 10 certified farmers market managers to mentor 10 new or beginning market managers during the course of the 2015 farmers market season
- Objective 3: Engage 15 certified farmers market managers to mentor 15 new or beginning market managers during the course of the 2016 farmers market season

Goal #2: To **improve and expand the ██████████** by developing and implementing a continuing education program for previously certified market managers seeking advanced training and by including out-of-state satellite campuses

- Objective 1: Develop, implement, and provide programming that results in the recertification of 10 market managers by the end of 2015 and a total of 25 market managers (approximately 25% of currently certified managers) by the end of 2016
- Objective 2: Enroll market managers from out-of-state in the program by offering at least one satellite campus in the ██████████ in 2015 and at least two satellite campuses in other states in 2016
- Objective 3: Conduct a farmers market manager roles and compensation study to evaluate the effectiveness of the ██████████ Farmers Market Association's ██████████ on improving farmers market managers' and their markets' success rates to be presented in March 2016 and published by September 2016

Goal #3: To **build the capacity of the** [REDACTED] by investing in long-term strategic planning and professional development for staff and the association's volunteer leadership team

- Objective 1: Solicit input regarding the future of the organization from at least 25% of [REDACTED] members including representation from market management, farmer vendors, and organizational friends by March 2015
- Objective 2: Organize and hold a 2-day strategic planning retreat and organizational development training for [REDACTED] volunteer leadership team (staff, Board of Directors, committee members) with at least 50% attendance in April 2015
- Objective 3: Release [REDACTED] 2015 – 2020 strategic plan by July 2015 and report performance based on outlined strategies annually

This project addresses the FMPP mission by developing and providing training and technical assistance to farmers markets that will assist and support them in improving and expanding direct producer-to-consumer opportunities. The [REDACTED] to advance farmers markets to create a thriving marketplace for local food and farm products. FMPP's goal to increase consumption of and access to locally and regionally produced agricultural products is made possible, in part, through thriving and vibrant farmers markets.

#### 10. **Background Statement:**

[REDACTED] was formed in 2006 as a statewide association with a mission to advance farmers markets to create a thriving marketplace for local food and farm products. As one means for advancing [REDACTED] farmers markets, [REDACTED] has committed to developing professional development and networking opportunities for those individuals responsible for daily operations, market governance and market sustainability. We understand that the skills and responsibilities of market managers are critical for farmers markets to succeed in serving farmers, vendors, and consumers. Organizationally, [REDACTED] has a strong record and good reputation for the quality of professional development programming we currently offer, including our [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and our two-day annual [REDACTED]. However, farmers markets continue to demand more programming and support.

Similar to national trends, the number of farmers markets in [REDACTED] has grown rapidly from about 150 when [REDACTED] started in 2006 to more than 300 today. Consumer demand for locally-produced and marketed food is strong and growing, and farmers and small food and agricultural businesses are positioning themselves to meet that demand. As the farmers market industry continues to mature, farmers will have more market opportunities, be able to provide consumers with more choices, and create more jobs in rural and urban communities. Amidst this rapid growth and high demand, a high proportion of [REDACTED] farmers markets remain young, and many rely heavily on volunteers for daily operations and oversight. There is demand for expanded programming that trains market managers, helps them exchange best practices with their peers, and builds partnerships that contribute to long-term sustainability of farmers markets. Additionally, as a young association, we realize the need to simultaneously increase the competency of our [REDACTED] staff and volunteer leadership team (Board of Directors and committee members), as well as our organizational capacity so we can continue to grow and sustain our services to support our members.

It is critical that market managers have skills, both interpersonal and technical, to perform their jobs effectively. Through the implementation of our [REDACTED] and other professional development offerings, we have demonstrated that improving market management provides a direct benefit to the thousands of farm vendors who produce and sell their own products through farmers markets. Evaluation of the [REDACTED] shows that the program is successful in equipping market managers with the skills and knowledge necessary to successfully manage a farmers market. In three years of the program, 103 market managers have completed the full program

and been awarded certificates that recognize the individual as a professionally trained farmers market manager (see the 2014 [REDACTED] Annual Report included with supporting documents).

Program evaluations in 2014 indicated that 100% of participants found the program to be a valuable learning experience, 90% said they had concrete ideas to improve their market and were prepared to apply what they had learned, and 95% said they would recommend the program to a friend. To build on the success of this program and to expand the number of market managers who are able to access the training it provides, [REDACTED] is prepared to receive support to expand the program to satellite locations in [REDACTED] and in other [REDACTED] states. [REDACTED] also hears from market managers who have already received certification through the program that they want to continue to develop their professional skills and expertise and that they desire a way to communicate to farmers, consumers, and market stakeholders that they are maintaining a level of professional expertise. With support, [REDACTED] would like to develop a continuing education program that would offer recognition to those market managers who continue to develop their skills and knowledge pertaining to farmers market management.

Our experience implementing professional development programming for market managers has also shown us the power of direct, peer-to-peer learning environments between market managers. During the 2012 and 2014 farmers market seasons, [REDACTED] facilitated a [REDACTED] program focused on increasing the number of farmers markets in [REDACTED] accepting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. The program paired market managers experienced in accepting SNAP benefits with market managers that were just beginning to implement SNAP redemption at their market in peer-to-peer relationships. This model has been instrumental in supporting 26 farmers markets as they have begun accepting SNAP benefits (14 farmers markets in 2012 and 12 markets in 2014). Implementation of this program has illustrated two important concepts: (1) a mentoring program is an extremely effective way to support market managers and link them to the tools and resources they need to accomplish their goals; and (2) beginning market managers need to receive broader support in concepts essential to market management before they can develop the capacity needed to implement additional programming such as food assistance acceptance.

Our records indicate that of the 309 farmers markets in [REDACTED], 144 are currently accepting SNAP benefits, and of those 144 more than 100 are also participating in the statewide SNAP incentive program called [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] is a program of [REDACTED]. Because of the prevalence and success of the [REDACTED] program in [REDACTED], the majority of markets interested in beginning to accept SNAP benefits are also interested in beginning to participate in the [REDACTED] program at the same time. These simultaneous interests create an excellent opportunity to couple SNAP and [REDACTED] training and support in the [REDACTED] program moving forward. However, in order to increase the number of farmers markets accepting SNAP in [REDACTED], we need to be able to support beginning market managers as they develop their organizational capacity. Many of the 165 farmers markets in [REDACTED] not currently accepting SNAP are new markets (less than five years old) and/or are markets that experience frequent turnover in market management. These beginning market managers need support that allows them to build the organizational capacity necessary before, or as, they begin working towards implementing SNAP and [REDACTED] acceptance in [REDACTED].

The support farmers markets and direct producer-to-consumer farmers have received from our association over the past five years would not have been possible without the guidance of [REDACTED] Strategic Plan. The 2010-2015 Strategic Planning Working Document has been the backbone of [REDACTED] work since its adoption (see supporting documents). The document is reviewed at the top of all Committee and Board of Directors' meetings and is updated regularly to reflect the past and present accomplishments, as well as the future focal areas for our

association. Having a clear, concise, and recorded strategy that can be shared with staff, board members, volunteer leaders, members, and partners has been instrumental in both the day-to-day operations as well as the long-range planning of our young association. In order to continue our positive momentum and expand the support we are able to provide to our members, it is essential that we refresh this strategic plan and set a course for the next five years. All of our work and growth, and the sustainability of the thriving farmers market community in [REDACTED], is dependent upon our association's ability to set and achieve the goals outlined in a strategic plan.

Without this project, the resources do not exist to accomplish the goals and objectives outlined in this proposal. As we have demonstrated with past grants, an initial investment in the development and implementation of new programming will provide us with the foundation to carry on the same program year after year.

11. **Workplan, Resource, and Timeline Requirements:**

Goal #1: To **develop a farmers market manager mentorship program** that offers training and technical assistance to beginning market managers in order to assist and support them in the development, improvement, and expansion of farmers markets

Goal #1 Scope of Work

Activity	Timeline	Milestones	Responsible Party
Develop a framework for the new market manager mentorship program	October – December 2014	Release program description, participant expectations and applications on December 11, 2014 at the [REDACTED]	Project Manager, Program Director, and Executive Director (in-kind)
Promote the new market manager mentorship program	November 2014 – September 2016	<p>Create and maintain a new program page with all related information online, including enrollment applications, at [REDACTED]</p> <p>Develop and distribute printed promotional materials at the [REDACTED] (approximately 4,000 attendees) in December 2014 and 2015; the [REDACTED] (approximately 900 attendees) and the [REDACTED] (approximately 400 attendees) in January 2015 and 2016; and the [REDACTED] (approximately 150 attendees) in March 2015 and 2016</p> <p>Mail promotional materials to all [REDACTED] farmers markets (315) and [REDACTED] members and partners (720) by December 30, 2014 and 2015</p> <p>Record, edit, produce and release a 5-7 minute promotional video, or equivalent, by January 2016</p>	Communications Manager and Videographer with input from Project Manager and Program Director

Review participant applications for 2015 and 2016 cohorts	January – March 2015 and 2016	Hire 10 mentors for 2015; 15 for 2016 Enroll 10 mentees for 2015; 15 for 2016	Project Manager and Program Director
Pair each mentor with a mentee	March 2015 and 2016	Host Meet and Greet for mentors and mentees during the ██████ Farmers Market Conference (room rental provided in-kind)	Project Manager and Program Director
Organize monthly conference calls for participants	April 2015 – September 2016	Engage at least half of participating mentors and mentees each month in calls to discuss common challenges and best practices	Project Manager and Program Director
Support reciprocal site visits for each mentee and mentor pair	June – October 2015 and 2016	Require market manager mentors to visit their mentee’s farmers market to share advice and recommendations based on their experience. Require market manager mentees to visit their mentors markets to showcase successful mentor farmers markets and share first hand best practices	Market Manager Mentors and Mentees
Evaluate	October 2014 – September 2016	Collect baseline data through mentee applications and year-end data through a survey (survey software provided in-kind) at the end of each year  Interview participating mentors and mentees  Provide recommendations for program improvement in 2016 and beyond	Project Evaluator with input from Project Manager, Program Director and Executive Director (in-kind)
Develop an operations manual	January – September 2016	Develop an operations manual to guide ██████ and partnering organizations in planning, promoting and implementing an annual market manager mentorship program	Project Manager, Project Evaluator, and Program Director
Develop a sponsorship packet	April – September 2016	Develop and distribute a sponsorship packet to solicit support for a 2017 Market Manager Mentorship Program	Project Manager, Communications Manager, Program Director and Executive Director (in-kind)
<p>Resources Required:</p> <p><u>Personnel/Contractual</u> – Program Director, Project Manager, Communications Manager, Videographer (flat fee of \$1,750 for a 5-7 minute video, or equivalent, based on previous videographer contracts), Project Evaluator (based on approximately 10% of total project budget)</p> <p><u>Travel</u> – Roundtrip mileage to ██████ in 2014 and 2015, to ██████ in 2015 and 2016; to ██████ in 2015 and 2016; Two nights overnight lodging in ██████ (December 2014 and 2015), two nights in ██████ (January 2014 and 2015), one night in ██████ (January 2014 and 2015)</p>			

for Program Director and Project Manager; Meal reimbursement based on [REDACTED] (included in Supporting Documents); Provide \$100 travel stipends to each Market Manager Mentor and Mentee each year  
Supplies – Printed promotional materials (2,000 copies each year; 4,000 total); Postage for 1,035 stamps at \$0.45 each (\$465.75) each year for a total of \$935  
Other – [REDACTED] Vendor Registration for 2014 and 2015 (\$375 x 2); [REDACTED] Registration (\$150 x 2); [REDACTED] Vendor Registration (\$150 x 2); Market Manager Mentor Stipends (25 x \$300)  
Indirect Costs – General administration and expenses, accounting, audit, IT, telephone and fax, office supplies

Goal #2: To **improve and expand the** [REDACTED] by developing and implementing a continuing education program for previously certified market managers seeking advanced training and by including out-of-state satellite campuses

Goal #2 Scope of Work

Activity	Timeline	Milestones	Responsible Party
Develop a framework for the [REDACTED] continuing education program to include credits for [REDACTED] and approved partner educational sessions	October – December 2014	Release continuing education program information on December 11, 2014 at the [REDACTED]	Project Manager, Program Director, and Executive Director (in-kind)
Develop a partnership agreement for out-of-state satellite campuses	October 2014	Announce location of first [REDACTED] satellite campus on November 3 (see letter of support from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].	Program Director and Executive Director (in-kind)
Evaluate	October – December 2014	Design project evaluation including a farmers market manager roles and compensation study to begin to measure how effective the [REDACTED] and continuing education program are in supporting market managers (survey software provided in-kind)  Collect baseline data through the [REDACTED] registration process in November 2014  Interview at least 10% of past participants and 25% of current participants	Project Evaluator with input from Project Manager, Program Director and Executive Director (in-kind)

		Provide recommendations for program improvement in 2016 and beyond	
Promote the [redacted] and the new [redacted] continuing education program	December 2014 – September 2016	<p>Expand and maintain the [redacted] program page with all related information online at [redacted].</p> <p>Develop and distribute printed promotional materials at the [redacted] in December 2014 and 2015, the [redacted] and the [redacted] in January 2015 and 2016, and the [redacted] in March 2015 and 2016</p> <p>Mail promotional materials to certified market managers (103 in 2014 and approximately 125 in 2015) informing them of the new [redacted] continuing education program</p> <p>Record, edit, produce and release promotional video by January 2016</p>	Communications Manager and Videographer with input from Program Director and Project Manager
Use UStream technology to stream the [redacted] to out-of-state satellite campuses	January – February 2015 and 2016	<p>Conduct in-person sessions at the [redacted] located at [redacted] in January-February 2015 (supported with in-kind funds)</p> <p>Identify a location in southwest [redacted] for 2016 in-person sessions that is well suited for filming sessions and live streaming them to satellite campuses (supported with in-kind funds) and identify two out-of-state locations for satellite campuses by July 2015</p>	Project Manager and Program Director
Organize and host training sessions focused on advanced topics to provide continuing education credit offerings	January 2015 – September 2016	<p>Include a minimum of two continuing education sessions during the 2015 and 2016 [redacted] (speaker stipends required, but all other conference costs supported with in-kind funds)</p> <p>Organize one half-day market tour in 2015 and two half-day market tours in 2016</p> <p>Host one webinar in 2015 and two webinars in 2016 (webinar technology provided in-kind)</p> <p>Approve one educational program in 2015 and two educational programs in 2016 provided by partners as continuing education credits</p>	Project Manager and Program Director

Certify market managers who complete the [REDACTED]	February 2015 and 2016	Present certificates to 20 [REDACTED] market managers and 20 out-of-state market managers (one [REDACTED] representative to attend last session of all out-of-state programs) in 2015 and to 20 [REDACTED] market managers and 40 out-of-state market managers in 2016	Project Manager, Program Director, and Executive Director (in-kind)
Recertify managers who complete the continuing education program	March – September 2016	Recognize at least 10 recertified market managers who complete programming in 2015 at our annual meeting in March 2016 (supported with in-kind funding)  Recognize at least 15 recertified managers who complete programming in 2015 and 2016 during a press conference at our annual [REDACTED] in September 2016	Project Manager, Program Director and Executive Director (in-kind)
Share evaluation results to inform future programming	March 2016	Present results from market manager roles and compensation study during the March 2016 [REDACTED]  Publish results from market manager roles and compensation study by September 2016	Project Evaluator
Secure continued funding	September 2016	Incorporate program sponsorship into [REDACTED] Sponsorship packet (see supporting documents for example of 2014 packet)	Project Evaluator

**Resources Required:**

Personnel/Contractual – Program Director, Project Manager, Communications Manager, Videographer (flat fee of \$1,750 for a 5-7 minute video, or equivalent, based on previous videographer contracts), Project Evaluator (based on approximately 10% of total project budget)

Travel – Roundtrip mileage, lodging and per diem to [REDACTED] conferences (see Goal 1 for details); Roundtrip travel to three out of state campuses (estimated 2,100 miles); 2 nights lodging associated with travel to three out-of-state campuses for a total of 6 nights; Meal reimbursement based on [REDACTED] Personnel Policy (included in Supporting Documents); Roundtrip mileage to three farmers market tours with estimated 200 miles roundtrip per tour at \$0.56 per mile based on IRS rates (\$110 per tour)

Supplies – Printed promotional materials, Webcam and tripod (\$100) for live streaming, Press conference supply rental (banner poles \$20, 3-phase electric \$75, public address system \$40, podium \$30, weekday labor \$30 x 2 – based on the [REDACTED] Events rate sheet); Postage

Other – [REDACTED] (4 months x \$99); Speaker stipends (7-\$100 stipends for conference and webinar sessions and 3-\$300 stipends for market tours, based on our standard rates); Press conference rental (3-phase electric \$75, weekday labor \$30 x 2 – based on the [REDACTED] Events rate sheet)

Indirect Costs – General administration and expenses, accounting, audit, IT, telephone and fax, office supplies

**Goal #3: To build the capacity of the [REDACTED] by investing in long-term strategic planning and professional development for staff and the association’s volunteer leadership team**

Activity	Timeline	Milestones	Responsible Party
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Select a facilitator to lead strategic planning	October – December 2014	Hire a facilitator by December 2014	Executive Director (in-kind)
Strategic planning to include initial planning meetings, [REDACTED] member interviews, facilitation of two day-long sessions, or equivalent	January – October 2015	Host Strategic Planning Retreat in April 2015  Develop and distribute [REDACTED] 2015 – 2020 Strategic Plan by October 2015	Strategic Planning Facilitator
Resources Required: <u>Personnel/Contractual</u> – Strategic Planning Facilitator <u>Other</u> – Room rental (\$300/day x 2) <u>Indirect Costs</u> - General administration and expenses, accounting, audit, IT, telephone and fax, office supplies			

**12. Expected Outcomes and Beneficiaries:**

Expected outcomes include an increase in the number of farmers markets operating with professional management expertise and improvement and expansion of farmers markets as a result from training and education. Success will be measured, both quantitatively and qualitatively, throughout the project duration under the direction of the Executive Director (in-kind) and leadership of a Project Evaluator. Metrics of success include, but are not limited to: number of [REDACTED] jobs retained and created, number of farmers market management jobs impacted as a result of training and education, including number of market managers transitioning from a volunteer to a paid position as a result of gaining professional expertise, number of farmers markets expanded (as indicated by market sales, customer counts, vendor counts, new market programs, and acceptance of new food assistance benefits or incentives) and/or new farmers markets established after participating in training and education, a minimum reach of 120 individuals involved with market management, certification of at least 60 out-of-state market managers, recertification of at least 25 market managers, number of continuing education credits offered, number of partners offering courses for [REDACTED] continuing education, number of times project related information is accessed online, number of farmer/producer beneficiaries involved in participating farmers markets. If we use an average of 20 vendors per market and strive to serve at least 120 farmers markets, there is potential for more than 2,400 farmers and vendors selling at participating farmers markets to benefit from improved market management.

Overall, this project will benefit market managers, farmers and vendors, [REDACTED] members, and statewide farmers market associations in the [REDACTED] and beyond. Direct consumer-to-producer farmers, producers, and vendors who sell at farmers markets will benefit in three key ways. First, successful farmers markets and those markets with professional management expertise create viable market opportunities for farmers and vendors. Thriving marketplaces bolster sales and contribute to the profitability of farmers while keeping dollars circulating in our local economies. Second, we know there is often an overlap between market management and farmers/vendors with many individuals in [REDACTED] balancing both roles. Farmers and market vendors may serve in a market management capacity or play a role in market governance. These individuals will directly benefit from the training, education and networking provided through this project. Third, building

██████████ organizational capacity will strengthen the central resource upon which farmers and vendors rely.

Project results will be disseminated electronically and in person to farmers market managers, farmers, market vendors, partners and funders through our website (██████████), listserv, seasonal newsletter, and conference presentations. As we have demonstrated with past grants, an initial investment in the development and implementation of new programming will provide us with the foundation to carry on the same program year after year. Outreach will continue beyond the term of the project.

13. **Evaluation Criteria Statements: (This section is not required.)**

14. **Existing and Pending Support:**

This project will be possible due to existing support to cover the salary of the ██████████ Director (supported with organizational funds including membership fees and contributions), the 2015 and 2016 ██████████ at one primary location in ██████████ (supported through sponsorships and program fees), the 2015 and 2016 ██████████ (supported through registration fees, exhibitor fees, and sponsorship), and the 2016 ██████████ (supported through vendor fees and sponsorship). The proposed project will leverage approximately \$145,000 in current funding to foster the development of new initiatives and provide new program offerings. We also have \$10,200 in pending support for a SNAP market manager mentorship program that, when funded, will be used to support training and technical assistance as it relates to starting food assistance programs, including new EBT programs. As explained in the Background Statement, beginning market managers need to receive broader support in concepts essential to market management before they can develop the capacity needed to implement additional programming such as food assistance acceptance. This project will support the development of a comprehensive market manager mentorship program.