

**Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)
Final Performance Report**

The final performance report summarizes the outcome of your FMPP award objectives. You will not be eligible for future FMPP or Local Food 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 FMPP 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. Should you need to mail your documents via hard copy, contact FMPP staff to obtain mailing instructions: FMPP Phone: 202-720-4152; Fax: 202-720-0300

Report Date Range: <i>(e.g. September 30, 20XX-September 29, 20XX)</i>	April 01, 2016-September 29, 2016
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Recipient Organization Name:	Pronto General Services Inc.
Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:	Olga Farmer's Market
Grant Agreement Number: <i>(e.g. 15-FMPPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	14-FMPPX-FL-0043
Year Grant was Awarded:	2014
Project City/State:	Fort Myers/ Florida
Total Awarded Budget:	90,017.00

FMPP 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: _____

1. State the goals/objectives of your project as outlined in the grant narrative and/or approved by FMPP 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

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progress made and indicate the impact on the community, if any.

- i. Goal/Objective 1: To bring together families, friends and neighbors to create a sense of community within the Olga-Fort Myers Shores area.

- a. Progress Made:

A lot of progress has been made in the area of building a sense of community. We have established regular clientele that come with their families to the market. We have families that come to pick the fresh grape tomatoes off the vine or pick from our small strawberry patch adjacent to the farmers market. We have regular customers that are elderly that love to drive up to the front of the market and allow us to select and deliver the fresh produce to their car door. We have built a reputation in the community and people know us by name. Many of our customers are following us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. They know to look at our social media pages for the weekly freshly harvested vegetables. We have created the Olga Life logo and have it printed on t-shirts that we sell and we whole sale to another local Olga vendor. We are excited about our progress and look to grow more with this next step in the grant process.

- b. Impact on Community:

We have made our community aware of our farmers market and the community has responded positively by coming to our market to buy fresh products, to obtain advice on how to cook our fresh vegetables and to share their knowledge on how they cook our vegetables. Additionally, some of our customers have received advice on how to grow vegetables when they request it (this happens very often). Many of our visitors do not just come over to buy vegetables but stay and visit with the farmer and the market workers. We've built personal relationships with our customers. Additionally, many of our customers would visit our "Bonnie's Vegetable and Herb Garden" to pick their own vegetables and herbs. We also opened a ¼ acre U Pick strawberry patch for those who wanted to experience the u-pick strawberries (very popular with families of children). To many of our visitors, the visit to our farmers market and to our farm is not a short visit to buy produce but an experience. It is a quality visit with substance, which demanded time and the interchange of ideas that included questions and answers sessions. It is a very different experience from visiting your super market or grocery store. To most of our 90 visitors per weekend, it was more a personal than commercial moment. On the other hand, our nearby farms who bought our fresh produce, also sold us their produce so we can share the fact of selling local and fresh vegetables. We currently do this with 6 nearby farms. We provide fresh vegetables to 3 grocery stores, 2 restaurants, one major produce market and one roadside vendor. We donate vegetables to a nearby church. We also provide and sell produce to nearby ranchers who raise chickens, pigs, goats and cattle. We have invested in advertisement with very local newspapers and we have active social media in order to reach out to our community.

ii. Goal/Objective 2: To strengthen the local economy by promoting local growers and other agriculture related producers

a. Progress Made:

We were able to buy local vegetable and other agricultural goods from local farmers and beekeepers. At the same time, these farmers bought our fresh vegetables to sell at their own farmers markets. We bought raw honey from Curtis Farms in nearby Labelle, we sold and/or bought produce from Estero Farms, Biggar Farms, 31 Produce Farms, all of which are located in the Fort Myers metro area. Additionally, we increased business by wholesaling to other customers that were not farms or agricultural producers. We were able to serve 90 to 100 customers per weekend.

b. Impact on Community:

We were able to provide farmers, agricultural producers and other customers with either farm fresh vegetables, or money in exchange for their products. Other types of wholesale customers were able to obtain fresh produce at a very good price. The same was true for our retail customers, who came time and again to buy our fresh produce at a low price (much lower than the major chain stores in the area). Even ranchers, who raised chickens, goats, pigs and cattle, benefited for our constant supply of produce which did not meet the minimum standards for human consumption.

iii. Goal/Objective 3: To create an environment in which we can educate our community in regards to nutrition, in regards to the process of growing, preparing and preserving local food sources. The project addresses the FMPP mission, bringing the farmer & the community together through a forum which will educate and bring awareness to the consumer, thus increasing the consumption of fresh and locally grown produce.

a. Progress Made:

Thanks to the help of two Master Gardeners from the University of Florida-Lee County Extension (Bonnie Clanci and Phyllis Faust); we were able to provide educational information to many visitors who would ask about how to grow vegetables in our SW FL sandy soil. Bonnie developed a sustainable, organically grown garden just behind the farmers market and she would show the people who wanted to learn about gardening. Bonnie would allow them to pick her fresh produce and also would give advice on recipes for the produce she grew. Phyllis guided customers to obtain the right information when asking about how to grow vegetables giving them the latest UF Vegetable Growing Handbook, and other UF Extension educational materials and brochures. During the first quarter of 2016, a Microgreens Urban farmer, Prita Lal joined Olga Farmers Market and would share her Urban Farmer's knowledge with us. She also transferred our knowledge and produce to her customers (mostly chefs of area restaurants). Cesar Peralta also gave advice in vegetable farming and informed customers about the different types of tomatoes that were being sold, what herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers were best to use when growing in our environment and sandy soil. Diane Peralta shared her enthusiasm with the

knowledge of the unique produce that was grown and sold at the market, sharing her experience and recipes for cooking these different types of vegetables. Through the www.OlgaGrown.com web site, our social media pages and advertising, we were able to promote our location and the freshly harvested and locally grown vegetables available.

b. Impact on Community:

We were able to participate twice this season in the UF Lee County Agricultural Tour. During those visits, we would explain the process of growing vegetables on the adjacent farm and show the full circle of how we got them to the market, bringing the awareness of “farm to table” concept. Additionally, we participated with an Olga Farmers Market booth at the Lee County Ag Fair and won the Best in Class ribbon for our unique Purple Cauliflower. We exhibited our Best in Class ribbon at the market and sold all our purple cauliflower to our customers at a very competitive, yet premium price. You don’t find purple cauliflower in the retail grocery stores.

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.

i. Number of direct jobs created:

At the beginning of the grant period, we had planned 3 direct workers and that is how we started. With time, as the Olga Farmers market expanded, we ended up with a total of 4 direct workers, Phyllis Faust, Bonnie Clanci, Diane Peralta and Cesar Peralta. This is evidence of our growth.

ii. Number of jobs retained:

We retained the first 3 jobs we had planned for (we just changed one of the persons doing one of the jobs, but the job position remained). At the end of this project, not only were we able to retain the jobs but we were able to create an additional job for a total of 4 job positions.

iii. Number of indirect jobs created:

One worker was added for one day (8 working hours) to do additional produce washing and prepping for wholesale deliveries.

iv. Number of markets expanded:

From 0 customers, we were able to expand/open not only the retail market in which approximately 90 paying customers per weekend visited the Olga Farmer’s Market. Additionally, in the wholesale market, we were able to expand from 0 to 5 types of wholesale customers with a total of 13 wholesale clients of this market.

v. Number of new markets established:

Besides the retail customers (many of them became regular customers), this is the name list of the new 11 wholesale customers established, and most of whom are in the metro Fort Myers area:

- 4 New farmer's markets: Biggar Farms, Estero Farms, Prital Lal (microgreens farmer) and Highway 31 Farms.
- 3 Stores: Maxx Foods, Oscar Grocery store and Olga Mall store.
- 2 Restaurants: The Pecking Order and Trattoria Mia.
- 1 Produce Stand: Roosters.
- 1 Roadside stand: (Lucy & Patricia Cardenas).

vi. Market sales increased by \$ 19,000 and increased by a great percentage because it was zero before we started. %.

Because we started from 0 dollars in sales late in 2014, a percentage of sales cannot be obtained because if we divide by 0, we will obtain an infinite number (a huge increase in the sales percentage). But a total number of sales. But at the end of the Florida Farmers market season, May of 2016, these are the numbers:

- Retail sales (total for the 2 seasons): \$ 10,000 (approximately)
- Wholesale (total for the 2 seasons): \$ 9,000 (approximately)
- This means that we started with 0 and ended with almost \$ 20,000 in sales.

Note: in both Farmer's Market seasons, we were unable to start in the months of October, which is when most of the farmers market begins to open. For the 2014-15 we began to work on April of 2015, only for 2 months, until the end of May 2015. For the following season, 2015-2016, we were able to open on November of 2015 and remained open until the last weekend of May of 2016. So a total of 9 months of sales (about 36 weeks), which included only weekends, produced sales in the order of \$ 19,000. That is an average of \$ 528 of total sales per weekend of market activity. We expect to triple these sales numbers in 2 years. We also intend to obtain more money from the rental of space to other farmers market vendors at our location.

vii. Number of farmers/producers that have benefited from the project:

We benefited farmers with whom we bought wholesale and resold their products at our market. And they were able to benefit from purchasing our farm fresh produce to resell. The total number of local farmers who benefited is 7. This is the breakdown:
 Farmers with whom we bought their local products (3): Burns Creekside Farms (goat milk made products such as goat soap, lotion and sugar scrubs, etc.); Curtis Farms (raw honey) and Martin Mason's Citrus Farm (3 types of citrus fruits).
 Farmers to whom we would sell our produce to and would occasionally buy produce from (4): Biggar Farms, Estero Farm, Highway 31 Farm and Prita Lal (micro greens farmer). Again, because at the beginning we had no customers, the % increase cannot be calculated, but at the end, these are the direct farmers that benefited from having a commercial relationship with our Farmers market.

a. Percent Increase:

Again, because at the beginning we had no customers, the % increase cannot be calculated, but at the end, these are the direct farmers that benefited from having a commercial relationship with our Farmers market.

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 we expanded our customer base and besides advertising in the English Speaking newspaper "The Lantern" we also advertised in the Spanish Newspaper "Imagen Semanal" a weekly paper of SW Florida. We received many calls and visits from Hispanic customers. Additionally, I received many inquiries from potential vendors who wanted to come over and sell their products. One vendor was Gladys, who came all the way from Naples, FL to sell her Argentinian empanadas. About 10 to 15 % of our customers were Hispanics and a smaller percentage was African American and Asian. We also catered to the lower income customers with our discount produce. We made it affordable so everyone left with all that they wanted and needed. We also donated produce to the local church food pantry.

4. Discuss your community partnerships.

- i. Who are your community partners?

We have two types of partners, the ones who are officially committed to working with us next season (2016 until 2017) Officially, Bonnie Clanci, Phyllis Faust and Prita Lal have committed with a written document to work for us in the farmer's market season to continue to educate the customers on Master Gardener topics, small gardening ideas, and microgreens growing. We also have partnered with another local Olga business, the Olga Mall which is a small café and antique store. They resell our fresh produce, honey and the Olga Life t-shirts we have created with advertisement on the back. We also partner with the local UF Lee County Extension office to participate in the annual Ag tour, and this next season we hope to offer classes at the farmers market for the local population.

Unofficially, the Adventist church next door will allow us to put an advertising sign on their property. And of course the local farms markets, stores and restaurants that we have relationships with will also be our partners this next season.

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

Bonnie Clanci is committed to grow her next sustainable and organically grown garden in order to sell, to show and to educate about growing backyard gardens. She also is willing to do some canning work and educate the customers on the process of canning. Phyllis Faust, is willing to work during the next season with sales of the farm produce and products as well as to guide people on how to grow and obtain information regarding home gardening and food preservation.

Prita Lal, has also committed to continue our purchase/sell relationship with intent to perhaps grow some of her organic herbs on our adjacent farm to sell at the Olga Farmers Market. Our wholesale vendors are also great contributors as they purchase our farm fresh vegetables from the market multiple times per week throughout the entire season. Olga Mall has partnered with us to sell our products at their local retail store/café. We are the only two official Olga businesses and we are proud to support each other. The community supporters will do many things for us besides buying our produce. They will do advertising, spread by word of mouth and by recommending us to other persons in the community. The University of Florida IFAS Lee County Extension

has already asked us to allow the Agricultural tour buses to come to our farm to check out our farmer's market. Two restaurants have asked us to grow microgreens for them (especially basil) and we are focused on growing and selling that for the next season.

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

We already have commitments from many partners, regardless of the fact if we get a grant we have applied for (the FMPP 2016 Capacity Building grant). The granted funds will give us a strong push to continue growing the market. But if it does not happen, we do have a backup plan to continue to work with the market. Our wholesale customers will continue to purchase from us, our employees LOVE the market and the opportunity to share their knowledge with others and will continue to support and work at the market as it is enjoyable to them as they are retired and find this work is enjoyable and rewarding.

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

No we did not use any contractors. We did all the work ourselves.

- 6. Have you publicized any results yet?*

No, other than the 3 previous Interim Performance Reports and this final report, no other work has been done. We have sent all that information to the FMPP only

- i. If yes, how did you publicize the results?
- ii. To whom did you publicize the results?
- iii. 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).

We created a web page: www.olgagrown.com and additionally are very active in the social media with our following names: Facebook: Olga Farmers Market, Twitter: @olgagrown, Instagram: olga_grown, and Now trending: #olgagrown. Check us out and follow us! 😊

I will send an email with the newspaper advertising and fliers we distributed as an attachment. There are 2 scanned of 2 newspapers (The Lantern and Imagen Semanal) and 1 scanned flier.

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

Yes we have in the form of verbal support and written support on our social media pages. We have received a lot of verbal community support from our visitors and the Fort Myers Shores Community Association.

- i. If so, how did you collect the information?
Other than the written comments on the social media, the rest of them have been verbal. How would you like for us to collect it next season?
- ii. What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?
People are very happy we are here as an additional alternative. They cheer us on. Many of the customers keep on coming back. Our church next door has offered space for us to put additional advertising (boards on their main road facing property). A lady who works with veterans who want to become farmers said "the place felt spiritually good". A

restaurant owner said “I could not get any fresher collard greens or kale for my restaurant”. We are constantly fed with positive comments. Check out our social media pages.

8. Budget Summary:

- i. As part of the FMPP closeout procedures, you are required to submit the SF-425 (Final Federal Financial Report). Check here if you have completed the SF-425 and are submitting it with this report:
- ii. Did the project generate any income?
 - a. If yes, how much was generated and how was it used to further the objectives of the award?

Yes it did generate an income of about \$ 19,000 dollars in the period of time we already mentioned (36 weekends). All of this money was put back into the market.

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).
 - Creating a web page and using the social media was not initially planned. But it became a great advertising tool. This is a positive lesson that should be repeated by all farmers’ markets.
 - Exchanging work space for working time. This is an arrangement we accomplished with Bonnie Clanci. She is retired, eager to work on her own garden to produce food for herself, her relatives and her friends. She also loves to teach about what she does. In exchange for this, she works 4 hours on Sundays per season weekend. She sells her garden produce at the market and also educates people on how to grow and how to cook what is grown in her garden. Additionally, she is the one who came out with the canning recipe for our tomato preserves with a fresh lemony-sweet flavor. I strongly suggest you find people who are passionate about this business because they have the vocation to work hard and find it gratifying and rewarding.
 - Visit another farms and farmers markets, chances are that you will learn something positive from them (from advertising, to marketing and to what to grow). That is a positive thing.
 - Having the farmers market on the farm assured us of having fresh produce all the time. But because a farmer can’t have all the produce all the time, only some produce for some time, few times we had to rely on other farmers or other major wholesale markets were we could add produce we did not have to our repertoire of produce. So having connections with other farmers markets or wholesale markets is a must to offer variety and have fresh and local produce to sale.
 - On the negative side, the leasing of the space to other farmers and vendors should be as low as possible in order to attract their business. People like to see a variety of vendors, no just one or two or three, but many more. To them, a trip to the farmer’s market is not a trip to a grocery store. It is a much different experience. The more diversity and variety, the better. We decided not to

charge for the space, kind of late in the game so we could attract more vendors. The only hurdle was the liability insurance that every vendor must carry when selling products on leased land. We will not charge for vendor's spaces during the growth period of the market, allowing the vendors to have the money to purchase the liability insurance needed to operate.

- ii. If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving: The biggest lesson learned is that no matter how good your plan is, there are going to be unexpected situations in which you were not prepared. So dealing with the unexpected will have to be expected. For us, one of the biggest frustrations was the fact that many vendors did not even want to try to set up a space because of the cost of the insurance. Our strategy changed. No more were we willing to collect rental for the spaces as long as the vendors would pay the liability insurance. We are very sure that if we would have more vendors with us the daily sales would have been far greater. Additionally, have certain capacity of semi processing (even if it is slicing fruits) will add value to your produce. So you can go a bit further than just producing vegetables or buying and selling vegetables. A slight transformation of any produce can transform that produce into something that can easily sell and for more money. So that is something we will try to implement as a tactic for next season. The idea will be to reach 40 to 60 thousand dollars in sales per market season during the next year or two. But we fell short of the desired figure by at least 50% from the desired 40 thousand dollars per market season. We did not implement electronic card reading, which we will add this next season. The other thing we did not implement was accepting SNAP cards. That could have reached another demographic of customers. So those purchase options will be implemented during the next season.
- 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.

Even though we did not have such a large volume of sales, we kept sales on a written notebook tablet. This is ok, but when it comes to analyzing sales, etc. It is better to have electronic systems that collect data on what is selling, at what price, etc. this tool will help you make decisions. Our goal is to purchase an electronic cash machine that can capture that data for us at each sale. For produce markets, it is important to invest in cooling equipment so as to have capacity to hold your produce at a cool temperature and for much longer time period than if you do not have cooling capacity. Another administrative point is to take into account that advertising is very important and that a strong and aggressive budget must be set aside to pay for marketing purposes.

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 have applied for a capacity building grant with the purpose of continuing to grow this market. In less than two calendar years (from October 2014, until May of 2016) 20 months to be exact, 36 weekends were used to sell almost \$ 20,000. This number is too low to sustain this business by itself. More funds will be needed to help it grow to the point of sustainability.

Nevertheless, there is a backup plan in case we are not awarded the grant.

- We will focus on offering more products such as boiled peanuts, cut fruits and cut vegetables. This should be more retail sales.
- We will focus on finding more customers, especially restaurants. This should increase our wholesales.
- We will continue with our educational conversations and inter-exchanges
- We will produce and sell new vegetables and herbs such as our purple cauliflower, white radish, heirloom tomatoes, and basil, which must be obtained fresh by the restaurants because it does not have a good shelf life, even when refrigerated.
- We will keep the same amount of jobs and if needed, we will increase them.
- We intend to embrace the SNAP program and have electronic payment options
- We will attract other vendors by not charging for the rental space for the first 3 months, until the vendors are well established.

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 plan to increase the amount of produce being offered, not only 15 to 20 types of vegetables and fruits but perhaps twice as much with more variety offered from our adjacent farm and other local farm purchases.
- We plan to transform some of the presentation of the produce by slicing some of the produce (for that, we will have to establish a process and meet regulations, obtain licenses, etc.)
- We will need to obtain equipment such as cabbage cutters, cooling equipment for produce display, washing sinks, and a water heater.
- We have created a space for a petting zoo (with small farm animals)
- We have created a plan to beautify the market by installing plant beds in front of the market and around the base of the trees. Some has been completed.
- We have budgeted to install a milk shake/smoothie machine
- We want to build a structure with a roof so we can put tables so people can enjoy a milkshake, a smoothie, fruits and where we can hold educational classes in relation to sustainable gardens, edible landscaping, and etc.
- We will have an edible plant nursery

These recommendations will increase the diversity of product offerings, thus increasing The population of people that will get to know farmer and the “farm to table” process.