

From the Roots - Brooklyn Farmers' Marketing Network

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene of Brooklyn, NY received \$58,954 to launch a community advertising and educational campaign to increase residents' patronage of farmers' markets; and to purchase EBT terminals, as part of a Farm-to-Bodega project, to increase farmers' revenues and the availability and convenience of purchasing fresh produce by local residents at local Bodega markets. Funds were used to purchase EBT equipment; implement EBT at farmers markets and bodegas; promote EBT use among low-income residents at farmers' markets; and pay for newspaper advertisements, direct mailings, and sponsorship of community events.

Final Report



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE
Thomas Farley, MD, MPH
Commissioner

Office of Grants Administration
42-09 28th Street, 14th Floor, CN 45B, Long Island City, NY 11001-4132
Tele: (347) 396-6038; Fax: (347) 396-6089

August 29, 2011

Karl Hacker
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 2646 So. Building
Washington, DC 20250

RE: USDA/Farmer's Market Promotion Program
Grant #: 12-25-G-0738 FMPP NY-128-2008
Budget Period: September 26, 2008 – March 28, 2010

Dear Mr. Hacker:

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH) is pleased to submit the following close out documents for the above referenced agreement:

1. Federal Financial Report (SF-425)
2. Final Performance Report

Should you have any questions, please contact Kevin Anderson, Grants Manager, at (347) 396-6035. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wilmer Ortiz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Wilmer Ortiz
Director

Office of Grants Administration

cc: Kimberly Bylander, Audrey Castillo, Files (2)

FEDERAL FINANCIAL REPORT

(Follow form instructions)

1. Federal Agency and Organizational Element to Which Report is Submitted USDA	2. Federal Grant or Other Identifying Number Assigned by Federal Agency (To report multiple grants, use FFR Attachment) 12-25-G-0738 FMPP NY-128-2008	Page 1	of 1
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3. Recipient Organization (Name and complete address including Zip code)
 USDA Farmer's Market
 NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
 42-09 28th Street - CN 45-B
 Long Island City, NY 11101-4132

4a. DUNS Number 083489737	4b. EIN 1-136400434B1	5. Recipient Account Number or Identifying Number (To report multiple grants, use FFR Attachment)	6. Report Type <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-Annual <input type="checkbox"/> Annual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Final	7. Basis of Accounting <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Accrual
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8. Project/Grant Period From: (Month, Day, Year) 9/26/2008	To: (Month, Day, Year) 6/28/2010	9. Reporting Period End Date (Month, Day, Year) 6/28/2010
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10. Transactions Cumulative

(Use lines a-c for single or multiple grant reporting)

Federal Cash (To report multiple grants, also use FFR Attachment):	
a. Cash Receipts	\$58,954.00
b. Cash Disbursements	\$58,954.00
c. Cash on Hand (line a minus b)	\$0.00

(Use lines d-o for single grant reporting)

Federal Expenditures and Unobligated Balance:	
d. Total Federal funds authorized	\$58,954.00
e. Federal share of expenditures	\$55,684.75
f. Federal share of unliquidated obligations	\$0.00
g. Total Federal share (sum of lines e and f)	\$55,684.75
h. Unobligated balance of Federal funds (line d minus g)	\$3,269.25

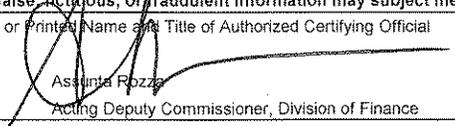
Recipient Share:	
i. Total recipient share required	\$0.00
j. Recipient share of expenditures	\$0.00
k. Remaining recipient share to be provided (line i minus j)	\$0.00

Program Income:	
l. Total Federal program income earned	\$0.00
m. Program income expended in accordance with the deduction alternative	\$0.00
n. Program income expended in accordance with the addition alternative	\$0.00
o. Unexpended program income (line l minus line m or line n)	\$0.00

11. Indirect Expense	a. Type	b. Rate	c. Period From	Period To	d. Base	e. Amount Charged	f. Federal Share
	Predetermined	9.03%	9/26/2008	6/28/2010	51,072.86	4,611.89	4,611.89
Predetermined	1.99%	9/26/2008	6/28/2010	0.00	0.00	0.00	
g. Totals:					51,072.86	4,611.89	4,611.89

12. Remarks: Attach any explanations deemed necessary or information required by Federal sponsoring agency in compliance with governing legislation:

13. Certification: By signing this report, I certify that it is true, complete, and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent information may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)

a. Typed or Printed Name and Title of Authorized Certifying Official  Assunta Rozza Acting Deputy Commissioner, Division of Finance	c. Telephone (Area code, number and extension) 347-396-6242 d. Email address srozza@health.nyc.gov
b. Signature of Authorized Certifying Official	e. Date Report Submitted (Month, Day, Year) 8/23/2011

14. Agency use only:

Final Performance Report

Date: August 22, 2011

Recipient Name: New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene,
Brooklyn District Public Health Office

Title of Project: From the Roots – Brooklyn Farmers’ Marketing Network

Grant Number: 12-25-G-0738

Location: Brooklyn, New York

Project Summary

The *From the Roots - Brooklyn Farmers’ Marketing Network* was administered by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene’s Brooklyn District Public Health Office (DPHO) to address the twin issues of supply and demand for healthier food options in low-income Brooklyn neighborhoods characterized by high rates of obesity, diabetes, and other diet-related health issues. In partnership with local markets, the Brooklyn DPHO developed a community outreach and marketing initiative in three neighborhoods of Brooklyn: Bedford Stuyvesant, Brownsville, and Bushwick to increase the number of vendors selling at participating markets, increase customer awareness about local markets, and increase customer purchases and farmer revenues. A total of \$55,685 was used to develop and print marketing materials for 5 markets (including postcards, banners, newspaper advertisements, and flyers); launch a direct mail campaign to local residents and organizations regarding local farmers’ markets; fund 4 part-time market staff to recruit market vendors, conduct community outreach to increase traffic, and manage SNAP EBT sales; and support community promotional events at the markets. As a result of these efforts, the following benefits occurred during the program period (2008-2009):

- 3 of 4 existing farmers’ markets in low-income communities began accepting SNAP EBT through funded manager position and technical assistance provided by DPHO
- All 4 existing markets saw a three-fold increase in the number of vendors, from 4 in 2008 (pre-intervention) to 12 in 2009 (intervention period).
- Market promotions, events, and increased vendors were associated with high levels of customer satisfaction with the selection and quality of food at the markets. Of approximately 100 customers surveyed in Fall 2009, two-thirds (67%) rated the selection of produce at the markets as good or excellent and 87% rated the quality of the produce as good or excellent.
- Of 8 vendors surveyed in October 2009, all stated that the market manager’s outreach, flyering, and promotional events increased customer traffic at the market.

Project Approach

The goals of the *From the Roots* project were to increase residents’ awareness and utilization of farmers’ markets in Bedford Stuyvesant, Brownsville, and Bushwick, Brooklyn, to fund remote terminals for SNAP EBT to offer multiple payment options, increase the

convenience of shopping at local markets, and increase farmers' revenues through local markets by at least 50% compared with previous years. The DPHO focused on the following objectives: 1) develop a network of market operators in North/Central Brooklyn to share resources and best practices for farmers' market promotion, 2) increase the number of farmers selling at participating markets to increase produce quantity and variety, 3) increase residents' awareness of local markets through a community mobilization and outreach campaign, and 4) increase the convenience of purchasing farm-fresh produce for low-income consumers by equipping markets with wireless Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) EBT terminals. The following strategies and activities were undertaken:

1) Develop a network of market operators in North/Central Brooklyn to share resources and best practices for farmers' market promotion

- Strategies: meet with existing market operators in target communities to recruit into network; convene regular meetings of network markets to develop a community-wide promotional campaign through member input.
- Activities: recruit markets in January 2009; begin *From the Roots* network meetings in March 2009 and convene approximately monthly until November 2009; develop agenda and share materials such as advertisement, flyer, and postcard examples to solicit feedback from group and develop a campaign message, logo, and timeline.

2) Increase the number of farmers selling at participating markets to increase produce quantity and variety

- Strategies: convene regular meetings of network markets to share best practices and engage in joint vendor recruitment, connect *From the Roots* markets to other Brooklyn market operator organizations to solicit vendor contacts
- Activities: convene network meetings March - November 2009; develop meeting agendas and materials such as sample vendor letters to aid markets in brainstorming and developing steps to jointly recruit vendors; contact other Brooklyn market operators by phone and email on behalf of network members to solicit additional vendor contacts; develop survey and survey vendors to obtain feedback on program

3) Increase residents' awareness of local markets through a community mobilization and outreach campaign

- Strategies: develop a community media campaign featuring unified messaging and graphics to promote *From the Roots* markets to local residents and organizations; fund part-time market manager/outreach staff for each market to conduct community presentations and street outreach; fund community events at markets to draw in consumer traffic and generate press
- Activities: convene meetings March - November 2009 with network to review marketing materials from other organizations, discuss and outline logos and graphics, liaise with DOHMH designers and vendors to design postcard, flyer, and banner promotional materials; solicit community contact lists from member organizations and local community boards; mail 3 seasonal postcards to approximately 2000 local block associations, community organizations, resident leaders, and businesses; print several thousand color flyers using grant and in-kind funds for markets to distribute; liaise with community newspapers to place five market advertisements along with a monthly market listing; obtain regular feedback from markets and part-time managers and provide technical assistance to assess street outreach and completion of market promotional

events; develop survey tool and survey shoppers at markets to obtain feedback on program.

4) Increase the convenience of purchasing farm-fresh produce for low-income consumers by equipping markets with wireless Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) EBT terminals.

- Strategies: through funding or referrals to existing programs, equip each network market with a wireless EBT terminal; provide training for market managers and operators on EBT sales management and outreach; link markets to DOHMH Health Bucks program to provide additional money incentives to SNAP EBT users to increase use
- Activities: research programs to support EBT infrastructure at farmers' markets; liaise with New York State Farmers' Market Wireless EBT Program, which provides free terminals and assists with terminal fees and training; provide Health Bucks coupons and sales tracking tools to markets to promote and monitor EBT use (Health Bucks are a New York City DOHMH program that provides a 40% coupon incentive to fresh produce purchases made with SNAP EBT at participating markets)

Goals and Outcomes Achieved

From the Roots documented the following accomplishments and outcomes as a result of programming:

1) Development of market operator network

- Five total markets joined to form *From the Roots* network and participated regularly in planning meeting
- Through input, network developed 3 seasonal postcards, banners, flyers, and a network logo that were used to brand efforts and distributed to more than 2000 residents

2) Increase the number of vendors

- Through joint recruitment and project's emphasis on vendor recruitment, number of total produce/food vendors across 4 existing markets increased from 4 in 2008 to 12 in 2009.
- Fifth network market established in 2009 secured 3 vendors during its first season.

3) Increase residents' awareness of local markets through community outreach campaign

- Launched direct mail campaign that reached more than 2000 residents with market information
- Distributed approximately 5000 market flyers to residents and local organizations
- Ran 5 newspaper advertisements and a weekly market listing in community newspapers
- Based on survey conducted in Fall 2009, reached approximately 10% of customers through flyers and promotional materials
- Funded 15 market promotional events on-site at markets to draw in customers

4) Increase shopper convenience and equip markets with wireless EBT terminals

- Equip 5 markets with own wireless EBT terminals
- Host webinar training on EBT terminal operation and management from State Farmers' Market Federation for 5 markets on May 27, 2009.
- Based on surveys conducted in October-November 2009, 7 of 8 surveyed vendors indicated that EBT payment capability increased their sales revenue somewhat or a lot.

- By offering EBT capabilities, markets succeeded in attracting new customers or providing payment flexibility to existing ones. Of approximately 100 shoppers surveyed at the markets in Fall 2009, 44% were receiving SNAP benefits; of those, more than half (58%) had used SNAP EBT at *From the Roots* markets in 2009.
- By end of the 2009 market season, at least two of the markets (in Bushwick) reported average weekly EBT sales of \$100-\$200, new revenue compared to 2008
- Distributed 2,350 Health Bucks coupons to promote EBT use at markets; approximately 67% of Health Bucks EBT coupons were redeemed at network markets, resulting in \$3,160 in new farmer revenue from Health Bucks-EBT sales alone compared to 2008.

Beneficiaries.

The project specifically benefited low-income, public benefit users in Bedford Stuyvesant, Brownsville, and Bushwick by expanding payment options to include SNAP EBT and allowed customers with limited incomes to access healthy, farm-fresh produce. Equipping markets with EBT terminals also greatly benefited market operator organizations and farmer vendors, who reported increased sales due to EBT payment options (see above). The promotional campaign, community outreach work, and events funded by this grant helped to raise the visibility of local farmers markets as places to buy healthy food. *From the Roots* likewise greatly benefited the market operator organizations – Make the Road New York, EcoStation, Brooklyn Rescue Mission, Brownsville Multi-Service Family Health Center, and Hattie Carthan Community Garden - by allowing them to invest in market development, promotions, and farmer recruitment and expand their markets for the first time beyond the one-farmer, produce stand model. Overall, the project greatly benefited the target communities by expanding venues where residents could purchase healthy, affordable, high-quality fruits and vegetables in neighborhoods with limited access to fresh produce. Results from customer surveys conducted in Fall 2009 showed the value of markets in underserved communities. Of approximately 100 customers surveyed, about 76% said that the quality of produce was better at the farmers' market compared to the local supermarket and 67% said that the price of produce was the same or cheaper at the farmers' market compared to their local supermarket.

Lessons Learned.

Overall, *From the Roots* funded activities proved successful in expanding sales at the target markets through overall promotion and the addition of SNAP EBT sales, expanding the vendor base and improving variety, and raising the visibility of local farmers' markets within the target communities. The funding of a part-time, EBT and outreach manager proved to be a key factor in project successes. The manager enabled the target markets to accept or better manage SNAP EBT for the first time, the addition of which was a benefit to all and which rolled out with few, in any, documented challenges. The role of the manager overall was beneficial to improving market operations. Managers who followed the program plan and conducted weekly community outreach, sought out new program partners in their target communities, and planned on-site outreach activities to activate the market space and garner media and community attention saw increased foot traffic, sales, and higher vendor satisfaction as reflected in the vendor surveys. Those markets (for example, Bushwick Market) continue to thrive in their target communities years later. While the presence of the manager was beneficial at all sites, not every manager capitalized on their time, however, and additional trainings for the managers on street outreach, earned media, and other topics would have been useful.

The development of the media and outreach campaign materials proved successful overall and gave a unified, professional look to outreach materials. Some of the challenges were the unknown impact of the direct mail campaign and the relatively low rate of surveyed market shoppers (about 10%) who said they had seen the campaign materials. In the future, a more extensive shopper survey would be necessary to find out the full impact of the promotional materials and determine how best to roll-out a promotional campaign.

One of the most surprising challenges faced by the DPHO was in developing and creating cohesion in the Network itself. Prior to the funding period, DPHO staff had worked extensively with each of the market operator organizations and had developed a high level of trust and collaboration with staff of those organizations. In bringing the 5 individual market operator organizations together, the DPHO found, however, that many of the organizations were not accustomed to working together and did not have the established trust amongst themselves to be completely forthcoming and collaborative in their approach. In fact, after a few months, it became apparent that a few took on the role of competitor rather than collaborator vis-à-vis other members of the group. At the outset, it was challenging to get the individual organizations to commit to sharing ideas and seeing the value in collaborative efforts with each other beyond the activities prescribed by the grant. Overall, if the DPHO were to do this again, we would first investigate successes and challenges faced by other market networks and think more closely about the “fit” of different operators and their ability to work together before exploring funding to support network formation in the future.

Additional Information:

From the Roots program materials were shared in Final Report August 2010.

Contact person:

Kimberly Bylander

Director of Physical Activity and Nutrition Initiatives – Brooklyn

Brooklyn District Public Health Office – NYC DOHMH

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