



REGIONAL FOOD BUSINESS CENTER

SEMIANNUAL PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT

A Semiannual Performance Progress Report must be received within 30 days after the end of the first six months of the date of the signed agreement and 30 days after the end of each six-month period until the expiration date of the cooperative agreement. These performance reports illustrate the progress made toward the completion of each project within the agreement.

The report must cover the most recent six-month project performance period. Provide answers to each question below, or answer “not applicable” or “no results available yet” where necessary.

RECIPIENT INFORMATION

Cooperative Agreement Number:

Recipient Organization Name:

Representative Name:

Representative Email and Phone:

Report Date Range (e.g., January 2023 – June 2023):

Date Report Submitted:

Unless otherwise noted, only report on activities occurring and metrics collected in the last six months (the reporting date range). Do not report cumulative data unless specifically requested.

NARRATIVE

Understanding challenges and successes at the center and network level.

1. Describe the progress and/or accomplishments on project activities. Highlight the impacts on the project’s beneficiaries.
2. Describe challenges or developments:
 - a. Describe the steps or project changes taken (or that will be taken) to address those challenges.
 - b. Describe how the USDA might assist with any challenges, to the extent it is able.
3. Describe any significant changes, external to this project, to the region’s food system (weather-related challenges, new distributors or retail outlets, new organization playing a significant role, etc.).

Last updated 7.31.2023

Describe activities and accomplishments anticipated in the next reporting period.ies and accomplishments anticipated in the next reporting period.

4. What activities/impacts do you hope to accomplish in the next six months? Include information about anticipated community impact and outreach, new technical assistance, and any other information you'd like to share.

ACTIVITIES

COORDINATION ACTIVITIES

Describe activities related to the Regional Food Business Center's role as a coordinating entity across the region.

5. Number of new partnerships and/or collaborations established through Regional Food Business Center activities (including USDA; federal, state, and tribal agencies; regional commissions; stakeholders; other Regional Food Business Centers; etc.)
6. Provide the following information about the established partnerships/collaborations:
 - a. The number formalized with written agreements (i.e., MOU's, signed contracts, etc.)
 - b. The number of partnerships with organizations representing underinvested communityⁱ

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Describe technical assistance needs and offerings in the region, including changes in needs over this reporting period.

7. What technical assistance needs have been identified for food businesses in the region?
8. Briefly describe how have you been able to respond to those needs.
9. What, if any, technical assistance needs have you not been able to address? What assistance or support can USDA provide to help address the unmet needs?
10. How many new (not previously reported) technical assistance providers is the Center working with?
11. How many food businesses/organizations have been served via the technical assistance providers?
12. Number of individuals trained or provided technical assistance.

Of those, the number trained on the following topics:

 - a. How to develop or maintain a direct-to-consumer enterprise
 - b. Accessing institutional consumers
 - c. Using new strategies to improve local/regional food processing, distribution, aggregation, or storage
 - d. Value chain coordination
 - e. Market development
 - f. Navigating and managing financial resources from third parties
 - g. Minor business development
 - h. Other, please specify

CAPACITY BUILDING/BUSINESS BUILDER SUBAWARDS

Describe processes and outcomes related to Business Builder Subaward investment in your region.

For the following questions (13-16), report on the Business Builder subawards that were awarded during the past six months:

13. How many Business Builder Subawards have been distributed? (May be not applicable during some reporting cycles):
 - a. How many subaward applications were submitted?
14. Total funding awarded for Business Builder Subawards in the past six months.
15. Of Business Builder Subawards awarded in the past six months, the number intended to create new businesses.

Of those new businesses, how many were:

 - a. Food hubs/aggregators
 - b. Distributors
 - c. Processors
 - d. Other, please list
16. Of Business Builders Subawards awarded in the past six months, the number intended to expand business operations.

Of those businesses expanding operations, how many were:

 - a. Food hubs/aggregators
 - b. Distributors
 - c. Processors
 - d. Other, please list

For the following questions, report on the Business Builder subawards that have closed/been completed during the past six months.

17. Number of Business Builder Subawardees that were able to access new market channels.

Of those, the number of new market channels that were:

 - a. Farmers Markets
 - b. Roadside stands
 - c. Food Hubs
 - d. Retailers
 - e. Wholesale market/buyer
 - f. Institutions
 - g. Restaurants
 - h. Other, please list
18. Were any additional resources (federal, non-federal, professional, and/or technical assistance) secured because of Business Builder Award activities? If yes, please describe source, purpose, and amount of funding.
19. How many jobs (in Full Time Equivalentents – FTE) have been created due to the Business Builder Subawards?

Last updated 7.31.2023

OUTCOMES

For the Outcome section, please aggregate and report on outcomes from all RFBC activities, including coordination, technical assistance, and capacity building/Business Builder Subawards. For example, when reporting on number of business plans developed, include business plans developed through technical assistance services AND business plans developed with Business Builder Subaward funding.

OUTCOME 1: EXPAND AND STRENGTHEN REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS IN RESPONSE TO HARDSHIPS AND VULNERABILITIES EXPOSED BY RECENT NATIONAL EMERGENCIES, PARTICULARLY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

20. Of the partnerships/collaborations developed through Regional Food Business Center activities (Question 5 – Coordinating activities), the number of partnerships that reported:
 - a. Increased sales/purchasing of regional food products
 - b. Coordinated communication or marketing campaigns
 - c. More efficient and coordinated use of resources
 - d. Additional funding secured as a result of partnership
 - e. Collaborative activities to achieve shared goals (please specify)
 - f. Other reported outcomes of collaboration (please specify)
21. What USDA agencies have Centers and/or stakeholders successfully connected with?
22. What USDA agencies would the Center like support in connecting with?
23. What steps have been taken to sustain the work of the partnerships beyond the cooperative agreement?
24. How do the new partnerships and networks developed through Center activities affect local and regional supply chains? Provide at least two examples.

OUTCOME 2: CREATE MORE AND BETTER MARKETS AND INCREASE MARKET AWARENESS AND ACCESS, ENSURING SMALL AND MID-SIZE PRODUCERS AND PROCESSORS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN ACCESS TO DISTRIBUTORS, RETAIL OUTLETS, AND INSTITUTIONS.

25. Number of partnerships and/or collaborations established between **producers/processors and market access points (distributors, retail outlets, institutions, etc.)**.
 - a. Of those, the number formalized with written agreements (i.e., MOU's, signed contracts, etc.).
 - b. Of those, the number with and/or between underinvested organizations.
 - c. Of those, the number that reported:
 - i. higher profits
 - ii. increased access to institutional consumers
 - iii. other mid-tier value chain enhancements (such as improved capacity to transport products to market)
26. Describe how Regional Food Business Center efforts made specific contributions to improvements in the following aspects of distribution/supply chains: increased efficiency, reduced costs, expanded customer reach, increased online presence.
27. Number of stakeholders that adopted best practices or new technologies to improve distribution systems or supply chains due to center activities.

Last updated 7.31.2023

28. Number of stakeholders that reported increased or improved processing, distribution, storage, and/or aggregation of regionally produced agricultural products.

OUTCOME 3: INCREASE FOOD AND FARM BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL ACUMEN, INCREASE THE NUMBER OF NEW FOOD AND FARM BUSINESSES AND IMPROVE VIABILITY OF EXISTING BUSINESSES.

29. Number of new food businesses created through all RFBC activities (including coordination, technical assistance, and capacity building/Business Builder Award):

Of those, the number of:

- a. Food hubs
- b. Distributors
- c. Producers
- d. Processors
- e. Other, please list

30. Number of business development plans created

31. Number of food and farm businesses served reporting:

- a. Increased revenue
- b. Increased knowledge about new market opportunities
- c. Increased production to meet increased demand

32. Were any additional resources (federal, non-federal, professional, and/or technical assistance) secured for the region because of RFBC activities (including coordination, technical assistance and capacity building/Business Builder Award activities)? If yes, please describe source, purpose, and amount of funding.

ADDITIONAL QUESTION

33. What else would you like the USDA to know?

REQUESTED ATTACHMENTS

- Subaward and Technical Assistance Recipient Information (Required, see below for more information)
- Updated Work Plan
- Additional evaluation and reports developed by the Center (Optional)
- Media Stories (Optional)

SUBAWARD AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENT DATA

BUSINESS BUILDER SUBAWARDEES

- County, Zip Code
- Funding amount
- Project Description

- Use of funds (e.g., Business or strategic planning, Processing equipment, On-farm infrastructure, Staffing/salaries, Packaging, Marketing, Transportation)
- Is this funding being used to create a new business or to expand business operations?
- Has your business/organization previously received technical assistance or other services from the Regional Food Business Center?
- Did you receive support to complete your application? If so, what type of assistance did you receive?
- Business/Organization Type (e.g., Producer Cooperative, Food hub/aggregator, Distributor, Processor, Producer, Manufacturer)
- Agricultural Product (if applicable) (e.g., Produce, Grain, Livestock, Poultry/eggs, Dairy, Seafood, Value-Added Product- specify)
- Is this organization led or owned by an individual from an underinvested community?

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS

- County, Zip Code
- Funding amount
- Services provided
- Type of entity (e.g. government agency (state, local, or Tribal), community based/non-profit, university or Extension, business enterprise)
- Is this organization led or owned by an individual from an underinvested community?

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS

- County, Zip Code
- Services/Types of technical assistance received
- Is this a new or established business/organization?
- Business/Organization Type (e.g., Producer Cooperative, Food hub/aggregator, Distributor, Processor, producer, manufacturer)
- Agricultural Product (e.g., Produce, Grain, Meat, Dairy, Seafood, Value-Added Product- specify)
- Is this organization led or owned by an individual from an underinvested community?

Note: According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an Agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0581-0335. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 8 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering, and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

ⁱ “Underinvested communities” are defined as populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic

life, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.