



AWARD YEARS 2022 AND FORWARD

This annual Performance Progress Report (PPR) must illustrate the progress made toward the completion of your project. If this project is completed at the time of the annual PPR submission, the project report should be marked as final. Please note character limits (abbreviated "char.") throughout.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title (250 char.)	Supporting specialty crop producers through education and training, support system development, and connection to industry.
Organization Name (250 char.)	South Dakota Specialty Producers Association
Project Start Date	Jan 1, 2023
Project End Date	September 29, 2025

ORGANIZATION POINT OF CONTACT

Full Name	Peggy Martin
Phone Number	605.685.5428
Email Address	peggy@cedarcreekgarden.com

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

PROJECT PROGRESS

Please provide the total percentage of work completed on the project.	100%
Is this a final report? Please select the box to the right if the answer is "yes".	☐

PROJECT BACKGROUND (REQUIRED FOR FINAL REPORTS)

Provide enough information for the reader to understand the importance or context of the project and any key findings. This section may draw from the background and justification contained in the accepted project plan. As the project has been completed, write this section in past tense. If this is an annual report, please skip this section. (1200 char.)

During this project SDSPA provided producer education & support, while raising awareness of the specialty crop industry. This was done through business development and workforce sessions, webinars, and classes, a podcast series on profiting from your market garden, developing a producer support system through intentional producer networking meetings & creation of a mentorship group, and assuring there was a strong representation of the specialty crop industry through events & promotion. All elements of this project were supported with strong marketing & outreach, allowing us to cast a wide net of producers & consumers.

OBJECTIVE(S) (REQUIRED)

Please provide the approved project's objectives from the accepted project plan. Use the boxes to indicate if the objective is in progress, has been completed, or is not (and will not be) completed. At the final report, if "no" is selected for any of the listed objectives, you must expand upon this in the Challenges and Developments Section. Additional objectives may be added as needed.

+	#	Objective (2,000 char.)	Objective Completed?
-	1	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge.	Yes
-	2	Objective 2 Producer network support system expansion through partnerships with organizations in the specialty crop industry, including SD Local Foods Coalition, SDSU, NRCS, and Value Added Ag Center.	Yes
-	3	Objective 3 Community outreach to increase public awareness and consumption of locally-produced specialty crops through partnership events, promoting producers online and offline, and subchapter support.	Yes

OUTCOMES

Please only report on the outcomes and indicators that are selected and approved for this project. Use the check boxes to indicate which outcomes and indicators are selected. Select the "N/A" box for any indicators that are not applicable.

1. INCREASING CONSUMPTION AND CONSUMER PURCHASING OF SPECIALTY CROPS



Indicators	Value	N/A
1.1 Total number of consumers who gained knowledge about specialty crops:	3,755	☐
1.1a Adults	2,170	☐
1.1b Children	1,585	☐
1.2 Total number of consumers who consumed more specialty crops:		☒
1.2a Adults		☒
1.2b Children		☒
1.3 Number of additional specialty crop customers counted		☒
1.4 Number of additional business transactions executed		☒
1.5 Increased sales measured in:		☒
1.5a Dollars		☒
1.5b Percent change		☒
1.5c Combination of volume and average price as a result of enhanced marketing activities		☒

2. INCREASING ACCESS TO SPECIALTY CROPS AND EXPANDING SPECIALTY CROP PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION



Indicators	Value	N/A
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Indicators	Value	N/A
2.1 Number of stakeholders that gained technical knowledge about producing, preparing, procuring, and/or accessing specialty crops	5,252	☐
2.2 Number of stakeholders that reported producing, preparing, procuring, and/or accessing more specialty crops		☒
2.3 Total number of market access points for specialty crops developed or expanded, and of those:		☒
2.3a Number of new online portals created to sell specialty crops		☒
2.3b Number with expanded seasonal availability		☒
2.3c Number of existing market access points that expanded specialty crop offerings		☒
2.3d Number of new market access points that established specialty crop offerings		☒
2.4 Number of stakeholders that gained knowledge about more efficient and effective distribution systems		☒
2.5 Number of stakeholders that adopted best practices or new technologies to improve distribution systems		☒
2.6 Total number of partnerships established between producers, distributors, and/or other relevant intermediaries related to distribution systems, and of those established:	12	☐
2.6a Number formalized with written agreements (i.e. MOU's, signed contracts, etc.)		☒
2.6b Number of partnerships with underserved organizations		☒
2.7 Total number of new/improved distribution systems developed, and of those, the number that:		☒
2.7a Stemmed from new partnerships		☒
2.7b Increased efficiency		☒
2.7c Reduced costs		☒
2.7d Increased specialty crop grower participation		☒
2.7e Expanded customer reach		☒
2.7f Increased online presence		☒
2.8 Number of specialty crop-related jobs:	12	☐
2.8a Created	6	☐
2.8b Maintained	6	☐
2.9 Total number of new individuals who went into specialty crop production as a result of marketing, and of those, the number who are:	10	☐
2.9a Beginning farmers or ranchers	8	☐
2.9b Socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers	2	☐
2.10 Number of market access points that reported increased:		☒
2.10a Revenue		☒

Indicators	Value	N/A
2.10b Sales		☐
2.10c Cost-savings		☐

3. INCREASE FOOD SAFETY KNOWLEDGE AND PROCESSES



Indicators	Value	N/A
3.1 Number of stakeholders that gained knowledge about prevention, detection, control, and/or intervention food safety practices, including relevant regulations (to improve their ability to comply with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and/or meet the standards for aligned third party food safety audits such as Harmonized GAP/GHP)		☐
3.2 Number of stakeholders that:		☐
3.2a Established a food safety plan		☐
3.2b Revised or updated their food safety plan		☐
3.3 Number of specialty crop stakeholders who implemented new/improved prevention, detection, control, and intervention practices, tools, or technologies to mitigate food safety risks (to improve their ability to comply with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and/or meet the standards for aligned third party food safety audits such as Harmonized GAP/GHP)		☐
3.4 Number of prevention, detection, control, or intervention practices developed or enhanced to mitigate food safety risks		☐
3.5 Number of stakeholders that used grant funds to:		☐
3.5a Purchase		☐
3.5b Upgrade food safety equipment		☐

4. IMPROVE PEST AND DISEASE CONTROL PROCESSES



5. DEVELOP NEW SEED VARIETIES AND SPECIALTY CROPS



6. EXPAND SPECIALTY CROP RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT



7. IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY OF SPECIALTY CROPS



ADDITIONAL APPROVED OUTCOME (IF APPLICABLE)



OUTCOME REMARKS (REQUIRED)

Please explain any quantifiable results, along with an update on their progress and data collection efforts for each of the outcomes and indicators selected in the accepted project plan. It is understood that the results may not yet be final at the time that this report is submitted; however, please provide an update on progress to date. If you do not have any data on the indicator(s) listed above, you must explain why in this section. (2,000 char.)

Obj. 1: Collected through monitoring attendance of different groups at online & in person events including producer groups, seminars & field days.

Obj. 2: Collected from connections made during SDSPA events & collaboration with support agencies for SC

production - letters of support, sub-chapters, newsletter & marketing & business development.

Obj. 3: Support 3 sub-chapters through online events & networking and tracking attendance & participation at industry events.

Ind. 1.1a&b: Result of adults & children that attended consumer focused events & interacted with SDSPA to complete an activity & learn more about specialty crops & production.

Ind. 2.1: Collected from individuals participating in online & in person events related to SC production & access. Those who gained technical knowledge through our website, social media & direct email communications are not included in the count above, this value was 231,875 for year 3 and 456,950 for the project total.

Ind. 2.6: 12 potential partnerships were recorded on post surveys from the business workshop in 2023. Follow up was conducted in the yr. 3, with no response. In yr. 3 12 more partnerships were measured between email follow ups, surveys & noting producers & distributor connections through/as a result of SDSPA events.

Ind. 2.8 a&b: As a result of our apprenticeship webinar, 3 individuals contacted the SD Department of Labor to further inquire about participating in the apprenticeship program on their SC farm. None have been hired. The reported numbers were collected from post surveys on SDSPA business development webinars & sessions.

Ind. 2.9 a&b: The beginning farmers reported are a result of surveys in yr 3. We received no responses to the socially & economically disadvantaged indicator. Members of the Oyate Teca Project, Medicine Root Farmers Market received information from 2 webinars. We estimate these numbers to be greater based on our understanding of our audience.

NARRATIVE

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (REQUIRED)

If this is an annual report, list your accomplishments for this reporting period. If this is a final report, your accomplishments should be cumulative and include all accomplishments previously reported on and updated to include activities conducted this past reporting period. Indicate how these accomplishments associated with each of your project's objective(s), outcome(s), and/or indicator(s). This listing should identify your project's partners and their contributions. Additional accomplishments can be added as needed.

+	#	Accomplishment (1,200 char.)	Related to (Objective/ Outcome)
-	1	Business Management Tools Year 3: SDSPA held a virtual brand scripting workshop with Dakota Growth. 4 growers were able to attend the group session to learn specialty crop marketing basics, and also have a private consultation with the presenter to get specific feedback on their specialty crop business' brand, website, and marketing. SDSPA worked with the SD Department of Revenue to conduct a webinar and record a YouTube video to help specialty crop producers with record keeping and understanding sales tax. The webinar had 2 attendees, and the recording has 37 views. Year 2: SDSPA had an inquiry to cover accepting of non cash payments. During this reporting period we provided a webinar that covered the use of the Square Software (5 attendees, 61 total views). Also, during a Farmers Market Coalition meeting we invited others to learn from the Burke Area Farmers Market about a variety of things, including their "one stop shop" payment method at their market. The meeting had 5 attendees.	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge.

-	2	Workforce Development Year 3 - SDSPA hosted a webinar on seasonal labor recruitment and retention. The SD Dept of Labor shared ways to incentive, advertise, and recruit seasonal laborers. Producer, Nancy Kirstein from Good Earth Farms in Lennox, SD shared about seasonal labor options and their pros and cons, including Good Earth's experience with different types of seasonal labor programs. The webinar had 3 attendees and 15 views. "I enjoyed the information shared today; it really helped me learn new methods that I did not know were out there. I look forward to the next one. Thank you for putting these together" - Attendee on post survey	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge.
-	3	Workforce Development Year 2: We had a Work Experiences webinar with panelists discussing how to become involved in the specialty crop workforce through internships and job opportunities by sharing ways to get involved, their experiences, and takeaways. (17 registrants and 13 attendees.) Total video views- 35 Year 1: SDSPA hosted a call with Andrea Kost, who manages the prison work release program. We had three individuals watch the recording of this call (https://youtu.be/SafHHLKc2Ro). This recording is unlisted, so each view represents a producer who contacted SDSPA to get the link, implying they had an interest in participating in a program that involves training prisoners nearing the end of their term to work in the community, potentially leading to a new individual involved in specialty crop production upon their release. We hosted a webinar highlighting apprenticeship programs, including a formal program offered by the Department of Labor, and informal offerings on specialty crop producer farms. 19 registered for the live session, and a total of 54 watched the recording at https://youtu.be/fp9-NhYB-Ec?feature=shared	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge.
-	4	Podcast Year 3: SDSPA's final episode in the series was with Dr. Ariana Torres Bravo, from Purdue University to discuss their Hort Calculator tool. This tool can assist beginning or seasoned farmers with calculating crop profitability & planning farm investments. 61 total listens. The third episode in the series focused on the Grow Your Green Farm Profitability Toolkit through the Minnesota Farmers Market Association, the episode covers important record keeping considerations, common mistakes by specialty crop farmers, and how to utilize the toolkit's farm profitability resources. Across all platforms this episode has 73 listens. The cut flower presentation about maximizing production, business management tools, and profitability was also turned into a podcast episode. It has 5 listens.	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge.
-	4	Podcast Year 2: The second podcast, Ep. 15 focuses on pricing CSA shares, [Rx Programs, measuring profitability, and practices that can be used to increase profitability]. There have been 97 total listens. We created a playlist on YouTube for all Marketing & Business Dev. Resources. Year 1: The first podcast of our Profitable Market Garden series, focused on calculating profitability in your market garden. Available here, https://youtu.be/prjzeyLKL5s. The episode has 59 total listens.	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge.

-	5	Networks- Farmers Market Coalition Year 3 - At the end of this project, the Farmers Market Coalition has 24 members. SDSPA manages a private Farmers Market Facebook group where programs can be promoted and members can interact. At the end of the program 19 members are participating. During the 3rd year of this project, the SD Farmers Market Coalition met quarterly. December 2024 - SCBG funding opportunities and community collaborations. 12 attendees. March 2025 - Value Added Funding (Rural Development) & Resources (local and regional packing and labeling options). 7 attendees. June 2025 Market Partnerships, Organization, and Development with Brookings Farmers Market. (3 attendees, 22 views). September 2025 - Value Added Guidelines and Ready to Eat Food @ Farmers Markets with the SD Dept of Health. 6 attendees and 63 views. Monthly promotion of the Coalition activities occurs on the SDSPA website, social media, and newsletters. National Farmers Market Week (Aug) promo occurred on social media and a statewide press release.	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge.
-	5	Networks- Farmers Market Coalition Year 2: At the end of the second year the Farmers Market Coalition had 29 members as a result of shift in membership. Below are some notable meetings: A meeting open to any interested individuals (7 attendees, increased SDSPA+the coalition's membership by 1) Marketing for producers and farmers markets with Cash Cow Co-op, (7 attendees.) Hearing from Burke Area Farmers Market, (5 attendees) Dakota Food Rx: How Farmers Markets can get involved. (4 attendees) SDSU sharing about Canning & Cottage Laws (11 attendees, 61 total views) SDSPA manages a private Farmers Market Facebook group where programs can be promoted and members can interact. At the end of year 2, 20 members were participating. Monthly promotion of the Coalition activities occurs on the SDSPA website, social media, and newsletters. Involvement campaigns were distributed in Jan '24 & Apr '24 (57 & 463 contacts). National Farmers Market Week (Aug) promo occurred on social media.	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge.
-	5	Networks - Farmers Market Coalition Year 1: SDSPA continued to provide support to Farmers Market managers and their vendors through our monthly zoom calls, which provide networking and education on various topics. The group had 30 members at the end of year 1. Some of our education during this reporting period included: Accessing resources on National Farmers Market Coalition page (unrecorded presentation) MarketLink Grants for SNAP benefits: https://youtu.be/ET7mTEP-tpM (45 total recording views) Hydroponics with Black Hills Cultivation & Supply: https://youtu.be/vU6xtTeDG E (27 total views)	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge.

-	6	Networks- SDSPA Flower Growers Year 3: The group ended the year with 29 members. Members met monthly & had presenters & discussions. Some topics included markets & avenues for cut flowers, available resources (e.g. Women in Ag group), florist & flower farmer relationships, cut flower research, & maximizing profit & production. The group had a display at the SD State Fair in the Hort. building, 2 new business cards were added. SDSPA manages a Flower Growers Facebook group for program promo & member networking. 30 members. Monthly promotion of the group activities occurs on the SDSPA website, social media, & newsletters. Select meetings were recorded/posted on the SDSPA YouTube Channel. - Optimizing Delphinium & Larkspur Through Timing & Protective Cultivation Methods for Cut Flower Production, SDSU (4 attendees, 28 views) - Pollinators in the Cut Flower Garden, SDSU (5 attendees, 120 views) - Maximizing Profit on a Small Scale Flower Farm, Sierra Flower Farm (11 attendees, 85 views) - Cut Flower Research: SDSU Research Findings and National Trends (14 attendees, 280 views) - Florist & Flower Farmer Relationships with SD Flower Farmer & Florist (5 attendees, 88 views)	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge.
-	6	Networks- SDSPA Flower Growers Year 2: Group ended year 2 with 41 members. They met monthly & had discussions & guest presenters. They put together a display at the SD State Fair with member business cards & floral arrangements. They enjoyed sharing information amongst themselves & having discussions. Some speaker topics included marketing, native plants, pesticide use, & soil health. Flower growers requested a Facebook ads 101 webinar, opened for anyone interested (9 attendees, 34 total views) SDSPA manages a Flower Growers Facebook group for program promo & member networking. Currently 36 members participating. Feedback: Grower posted seeking equip. "Thank you for sending. I have contacted them for info...I love the connections through this site," Rhonda Larson. Involvement campaign sent Apr '24 (463 contacts)	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge.
-	6	Networks -SDSPA Flower Growers Year 1: SDSPA launched a group for cut flower growers to network and learn together. We ended the first year with 39 members who joined monthly in person or via zoom calls hosted by SDSPA with an array of educational topics. During this grant period a contractor helped the group develop a logo, which they used to promote themselves at the SD State Fair. SDSPA manages a private Facebook Group where the members can interact.	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge.

-	7	Networks- SDSPA Fruit and Vegetable Growers Year 3: The SDSPA Fruit and Vegetable Growers have 33 members and met 3 times during YR 3 of this project. SDSPA manages a private Fruit & Veg Facebook group where programs can be promoted and members can interact. At the end of year 3 there are 198 members and non-members are participating. October 2024 - This meeting featured a variety of speakers sharing about resources and upcoming conferences for specialty crop producers including organic technical assistance, the SD Fresh Connect directory, Farm to School buyer meet up, and grant opportunities. 10 attendees. January 2025 - Featured programs and opportunities for producers including FSA, the SD Soil Health Coalition, VR produce safety course, research opportunities, and upcoming conferences. 9 attendees. September 2025 - Group member Grace Freeman shared about post harvest, drying, and value added products. (4 attendees, <u>19 views</u>). Promotion of the group activities occurs on the SDSPA website, social media, & newsletters.	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge.
-	7	Networks- SDSPA Fruit and Vegetable Growers Year 2: At the end of YR 2 there were 28 members in the SDSPA Fruit and Vegetable Grower Group. This group prefers to meet on the off season rather than monthly or quarterly. The group met in February 2024 via zoom with 9 attendees. The recording has <u>32 total views</u>. SDSPA manages a private Fruit & Veg Facebook group where programs can be promoted and members can interact. At the end of YR two there was 47 members and non-members are participating. Year 1: In April 2023 SDSPA launched a group for fruit and vegetable growers to create relationships and support amongst producers. The group had 27 members. SDSPA manages a private Facebook Group where the members can interact.	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge.
-	8	SDSPA Mentorship Group Year 3: At the end of the project period the group has 19 members. SDSPA hosted a series of mentorship sessions in February 2025 focused on seed starting, elderberry production and market, and grape production / grape vine trunk disease. The sessions had a cumulative total of 26 live attendees and were also uploaded to our Mentorship Playlist for later use. Elderberry (87 views) Seed starting (74 views) Grapes (28 views) Group communications were used to share about upcoming events & resources such as podcasts, YouTube playlists, and our resource database that may be useful for beginning producers. Based on group numbers & producer interest no 1-1 mentorship connections were made. Year 2: The SDSPA mentorship group was started to help connect new & beginning specialty crop producers with seasoned producers and helpful organizations on topics important to business management and production. Contractors sent a google form to connect mentors with beginning producers. Members of the group chose to wait to meet as a group and be connected, as they were in the busy part of the season. At the end of YR 2 the group had 16 members	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge.

-	9	Business Management & Partnerships Year 3: There was a planned in person session for year 3 to take place in March 2025. However due to low registration, weather, and the federal funding freeze, the session was canceled. SDSPA held a webinar focused on the funding side of business management for specialty crop producers. The South Dakota Small Business Development Center shared about their business planning resources, followed by the Farm Service Agency discussing what funders will be looking for, more about credit, and their resources for specialty crop producers. (1 attendee, 40 views). During this reporting period we had 1 direct request to access the materials that accompanied the business planning workshop videos. from year 2.	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge. Objective 2 Producer network support system expansion through partnerships with organizations in the specialty crop industry, including SD Local Foods Coalition, SDSU, NRCS, and Value Added Ag Center.
-	9	Business Management & Partnerships Year 2: The Business Planning workshop took place in Nov. 2023 with speaker Bob Weyrich from the SD Small Business Center. While the Value Added Ag Development Center was very helpful with the planning, representatives were unable to attend in person. There were 12 attendees. Recordings can be found here. Part 1. (53 total views), Part 2 (37 total views). A second session covering business strategy for local food success was done with SDSPA and the Value Added Ad Development Center at the 2024 Upper Midwest Urban and Rural Ag Innovation Conference. The session was attended by 22 individuals. Year 1: Through collaboration between SDSPA contractor, SD Small Business Center and the Value Added Ag Center, planning has begun for a class to assist producers with starting a small specialty crop business. This class is set to take place in Pierre in November, 2023.	Objective 1 Assist Specialty Crop businesses, with a focus on workforce development, training on business management tools, and providing mentoring and networking opportunities to share talents and knowledge. Objective 2 Producer network support system expansion through partnerships with organizations in the specialty crop industry, including SD Local Foods Coalition, SDSU, NRCS, and Value Added Ag Center.
-	9	Partnerships and Producer Support Year 3: In YR 3 partnerships were tracked through SDSPA's connections with partner organizations, producers use of partnership organizations, and partnerships developed as a result of this programming and events. SDSPA promoted S.D. Local Foods Coalition activities in our newsletter (8) and on our website (4) including their strategic planning sessions and outcomes, feedback requests, Coalition meetings, and the S.D. Local Foods Conference. Additionally, SDSPA communicated training/event opportunities bi-monthly. Farm to School Network activities were promoted in our newsletter (10) thought website posts (5) and web calendar events (5) featuring SD F2S Conferences, SD F2S focus group/listening sessions meeting promo and results, the F2S census results, grants, new SD F2S resources, & Farm to School month.	Objective 2 Producer network support system expansion through partnerships with organizations in the specialty crop industry, including SD Local Foods Coalition, SDSU, NRCS, and Value Added Ag Center.
-	9	Partnerships and Producer Support Year 3: We shared and supported the Women in Ag Network project through promoting their survey (Jan eNews) and hub manger positions (Website job board), through social media (5) as well has had them speak to our SD Flower Grower group about their listening sessions. 6 members signed up, including 1 flower grower. This number could be higher, as names are not required. During this reporting period the number of producers that pursued something related to the presentation contents or event was recorded. 2 farmers market related block grant applications were submitted by members after the DANR presentation to our Farmers Market Coalition. 2 fruit and vegetable growers were in touch with the state FSA office after their presentation to the group.	Objective 2 Producer network support system expansion through partnerships with organizations in the specialty crop industry, including SD Local Foods Coalition, SDSU, NRCS, and Value Added Ag Center.

-	9	Partnerships Year 3: In regards to the flower grower meeting focused on florist & flower farmer relationships, producer Isabelle Adams commented, " I actually used a lot of the info from this meeting when approaching a florist this summer... Thank you for putting together this meeting!!" SDSPA provided a letter of support for a research proposal by SDSU to study zero waste microgreen production, focusing on growing methods, the economics and profitability, as well as customer demand and connection. This was a great way to support continued development and expansion of South Dakota's specialty crop industry. From participation in the Farmer Meet&Greet, Dakota Fresh Food Hub gained at least 2 new retail customers and a new wholesale customer. They were able to connect a produce to the wholesale customer to specifically grow an item for them. Lisa Smith, from Dakota Fresh commented that " It was also valuable to connect with the other producers there". A hand out was created for producers including requirements to sell at the Country Apple Orchard which is looking for specialty crops& products. A similar checklist was added to the SDSPA aggregation guide & business model.	Objective 2 Producer network support system expansion through partnerships with organizations in the specialty crop industry, including SD Local Foods Coalition, SDSU, NRCS, and Value Added Ag Center.
-	9	Partnerships and Producer Support Year 2: SDSPA continued to promote activities of the SD Local Foods Coalition including upcoming events (including the LF Conference and Coalition meetings) and event recaps with our membership via our eNews, website and social media each month. (including 5 web calendar events, 11 web posts, & 11 eNews blurbs) Farm to School Network updates and activities are also shared with our membership via our eNews, website and social media. (including 8 web calendar events & 8 eNews blurbs) In August, SDSPA attended and helped plan a Cut Flower Field Day with SDSU at that visited 2 different flower farms (both SDSPA members) in South East South Dakota. The event had 63 attendees including flower farmers, organizations, and interested individuals. SDSU events and research are also shared with our membership via our eNews, website and social media. (including 27 web calendar events & 13 eNews blurbs) Feedback- "Thank you for all the wonderful ways you promoted and celebrated SDSU events and resources in the latest addition of this newsletter."- Kristine Lang, SDSU Extension 11/3/23	Objective 2 Producer network support system expansion through partnerships with organizations in the specialty crop industry, including SD Local Foods Coalition, SDSU, NRCS, and Value Added Ag Center.
-	9	Partnerships and Producer Support <u>Year 1</u> We have continued to collaborate with the SD Local Foods Coalition, including having a SDSPA contractor at the member meetings so information can be relayed to and upcoming events can be shared with our membership via our eNews, website and social media. SDSPA wrote a letter of support for a project being done by SDSU Extension to benefit vegetable growers.	Objective 2 Producer network support system expansion through partnerships with organizations in the specialty crop industry, including SD Local Foods Coalition, SDSU, NRCS, and Value Added Ag Center.

-	9	Partnerships and Producer Support Year 3 Farm to School Brainstorm Session was held in Sioux Falls, SD. During the event discussion was held to help understand the five barriers to Farm to School taking off in South Dakota. An SDSPA contractor attended and was able to offer insight about specialty crop markets, producer values, and other information to promote specialty crops and advocate for producers. 20 attendees.' As a follow up, a strategic planning zoom meeting was held about moving forward to increase and expand the farm to school network in SD. SDSPA contractor attended to offer a perspective from specialty crop farmers. 13 attendees.	Objective 2 Producer network support system expansion through partnerships with organizations in the specialty crop industry, including SD Local Foods Coalition, SDSU, NRCS, and Value Added Ag Center. Objective 3 Community outreach to increase public awareness and consumption of locally-produced specialty crops through partnership events, promoting producers online and offline, and subchapter support
-	10	Events- Value Added Ag Day Yr 3: SDSPA partnered with VAADC to plan educational sessions, recruit producers, & co-host the Value Added Ag Day at the SD State Fair. Contractor manned a SDSPA booth with SC activities & information to share. Approx 300 visitors came through the tent. "My visit to the State Fair in Huron for Value Added Ag Day hosted by the SDSPA made way for great conversation with both public and producers surrounding innovative regenerative agriculture and how we can continue fostering our connecting with partner agencies & organizations." - Tony Sunseri, St. Conservationist, SD NRCS Yr 2: SDSPA partnered with VAADC to plan & co-host the Value Added Ag Day at the SD State Fair. SDSPA's role included assisting with lining up specialty crop related speakers and vendors. SDSPA contractors & board members also had a booth to share about the industry. There were around 300 attendees. Yr1: SDSPA partnered with the VAADC to plan and co-host the SD Value Added Ag Day at the SD State Fair. This included lining up vendors & speakers, and having an SDSPA contractor speak on the specialty crop industry in South Dakota. Approximately 300 came through the tent.	Objective 2 Producer network support system expansion through partnerships with organizations in the specialty crop industry, including SD Local Foods Coalition, SDSU, NRCS, and Value Added Ag Center. Objective 3 Community outreach to increase public awareness and consumption of locally-produced specialty crops through partnership events, promoting producers online and offline, and subchapter support.
-	10	Events Year 3: SDSPA board member attended a field day focused on honey, aronia, and wine production in Huron, SD. During the event they were able to connect with specialty crop producers and share about SDSPA. 9 attendees. Board president and producer attended Ag Fest in Pierre, SD to represent South Dakota Specialty Producers Association and engage with legislators and ag stakeholders. 150 attendees. Contractor and board members attended the annual UMURAI conference in Oacoma SD. The conference allowed the opportunity to connect with producers, industry professionals, and other stakeholders while discussing important topics related to business development and production. During the event the 2024 producer of the year was announced and SDSPA held their annual meeting. 80 attendees. Contractor and producer Tara Lothspeich attended the Ag Day at the Washington Pavilion in Sioux Falls, SD. During the event they did specialty crop related activities and shared about specialty crop production, featuring cut flower production. 300 attendees.	Objective 3 Community outreach to increase public awareness and consumption of locally-produced specialty crops through partnership events, promoting producers online and offline, and subchapter support.

-	10	Events Year 3: SDSPA hosted 9 producers at a Farmer Meet & Greet in Sioux Falls, SD. Consumers could come meet their local producer and complete "Farmer Bingo" to win a specialty crop door prize. The event had news coverage, and around 50 consumer attendees. Contractor and producer Tara Lothspeich attended the Ag Day at the Washington Pavilion in Sioux Falls, SD. During the event they did specialty crop related activities and shared about specialty crop production, featuring cut flower production. 300 attendees. SDSPA contractor and cut flower business, Lou's Garden attended McCrory Gardens, Garden Discovery Festival in Brookings, SD. During the event the SDSPA booth had specialty crop children's activities and a display of started cut flower seeds and soil blocking / seed starting material. 100 attendees.	Objective 3 Community outreach to increase public awareness and consumption of locally-produced specialty crops through partnership events, promoting producers online and offline, and subchapter support.
-	10	Events Year 3: A Contractor attended a Cut Flower Field Day hosted at one of our subchapter members, Eden Acres. This event offered the opportunity to connect with growers and customers, participate in media interviews, and share about cut flower production in SD and share SDSPA resources. 61 attendees. SDSPA contractor attended the field day at Blue Dasher Farm in Estelline, SD. The event included discussions about specialty crop production in South Dakota, networking with farmers, and sharing about SDSPA resources, including the cut flower subchapter. 170 attendees. SDSPA participated in "Fittest on the Farm" at Country Apple Orchard in Harrisburg, SD. SDSPA shared about specialty crops in South Dakota and facilitated games and activities about specialty crops and production. 400 attendees. After the event a reel was created and distributed to encourage more consumers to find a apple orchard, pumpkin patch, you pick, or other agritourism experience.	Objective 3 Community outreach to increase public awareness and consumption of locally-produced specialty crops through partnership events, promoting producers online and offline, and subchapter support.
-	10	Events Year 2: A SDSPA contractor attended the SD Local Foods conference in Sioux Falls SD. It was an opportunity to connect with with producers, businesses, local chefs, organizations, and interested individuals. Approx 125 stopped by the SDSPA booth. SDSPA contractor and board members attended the Upper Midwest Urban and Rural Ag Innovation Conference. This event allowed education on specialty crop production, networking with other producers and organizations. There were around 100 conference attendees. SDSPA attended Ag Friday & Ag Day at the Washington Pavilion. We ran an activity starting specialty crop seeds and teaching the children and their families about what specialty crops are and the industry in SD. Blue Sky Vegetable, a producer came to visit with attendees on Ag Day. On Ag Friday, which is local 3rd graders, there were around 300 visitors. On Ag Day, there were around 200 including the children and their families. During the Garden Discovery Day at McCrory Gardens SDSPA and featured producer SoDak Greens led an activity on planting your own micro greens. Attendees were able to learn about specialty crops, micro greens, and hydroponics. Approx 50 attendees.	Objective 3 Community outreach to increase public awareness and consumption of locally-produced specialty crops through partnership events, promoting producers online and offline, and subchapter support.

-	10	Events Year 1: 3 SDSPA Board members attended Ag Fest in Pierre, networking with elected officials & sharing the importance of our industry in SD while sharing samples of SD Honey. Approx 250 attended. SDSPA accepted an invite to the SD Ag Stakeholders Meeting to provide input on key issues impacting the organization & producers, share the impact of specialty crops on the SD economy, & to discuss topics with state staff & partners. As a result of this meeting, we were also able to connect with DANR to begin conversations on having a SC producer highlighted as a tour stop at the SD Ag Summit. SDSPA participated in an Ag Day event for elementary students, and event for families put on by the Washington Pavilion in Sioux Falls, with a total of 650 contacts made between the 2 days. It was heavily attended by an urban audience who had an interest in better understanding where their food comes from. A produce grower & board member shared CSA and farm to table information.	Objective 3 Community outreach to increase public awareness and consumption of locally-produced specialty crops through partnership events, promoting producers online and offline, and subchapter support.
-	10	Events Year 1: SDSPA was represented at the Garden Discovery Festival by a contractor sharing about SDSPA's mission, and how each individual could find a way to connect either through membership, participating in our educational opportunities, or finding producers with our website. Over 500 people attended this event.	Objective 3 Community outreach to increase public awareness and consumption of locally-produced specialty crops through partnership events, promoting producers online and offline, and subchapter support.
-	11	Producer of the Year Year 3 - For the 2024 producer of the year award SDSPA received two nominations, Daniel Paulson, Farm 484 and Fredrick Fast Horse, Ricks Micro Farm. We received 1,415 public votes. Winner Dan Paulson attended the UMURAI conference to receive the award. The awards process highlights the specialty crop industry through a series of 3 press releases/online promotion related to nominations, voting, & awarding. Additional media follow up occurs with the winner. This opportunity draws extra attention to the industry over a 4 month period. Year 2 - SDSPA received three nominations for the 2023 Specialty Crop Producer of the Year award. Christy Heckathorn, Fluerish Flower Farm, Rodney Peachy, Prairie Lane Farm and Alan Carner, Black Hills Mushrooms. We received 304 public votes. Winner Christy Heckathorn was announced at the UMURAI conference.	Objective 3 Community outreach to increase public awareness and consumption of locally-produced specialty crops through partnership events, promoting producers online and offline, and subchapter support.
-	12	Producer Spotlight- SDSPA continued to run the spotlight campaign to increase awareness of specialty crop producer businesses. In year 3, graphics were created for 6 producers who were promoted on social media and in the SDSPA newsletter. In year 2, 17 producers were also feature. An additional 13 producers were featured in online only spotlights as well on social media. Specialty Crop Promotion- SDSPA transitioned its producer spotlight to 'in season' crop spotlights in the 3rd year. 39 Reels were made to promote vegetables, flowers and fruit crops. 36 were posted on social media (to date) identifying the availability of the crop with a link to SDSPA's producer directory, where consumers could identify near-by producers of the product.	Objective 3 Community outreach to increase public awareness and consumption of locally-produced specialty crops through partnership events, promoting producers online and offline, and subchapter support
-	13	Promotion Material Year 3: 500 more pens, and a wide variety of specialty crop recipe cards were printed to be shared at events and to promote visiting our website and social media. The recipe cards were a great addition for family based events, that were looking to focus on the nutrition of local food such as Fittest on the Farm at Country Apple Orchard. Year1: To raise awareness of SDSPA's resources, 1,600 pens and 200 specialty crop recipe cards were ordered. These have then been shared at our events to promote visiting our website.	Objective 3 Community outreach to increase public awareness and consumption of locally-produced specialty crops through partnership events, promoting producers online and offline, and subchapter support.

-	14	Social Media SDSPA dispersed educational information for specialty crop producers, buyers, consumers and other supporters through social media outreach on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. Year 3 Followers: Facebook- 3,237 (398 new); Instagram- 334 (44 new); YouTube- 570 (392 new) Yr 3: Reach: Facebook-158,901 with 10,540 page visits; Instagram- 3,159 with 226 profile visits; YouTube- 32.7K views During year 3: 2 reels were created to promote the subchapters, 6 reels were made to promote the youtube playlists that featured recorded webinars and meetings, 1 reel was created to share industry event photos from events supported by this project, 1 reel was created to promote the new recipe cards developed, and 24 reels were created to promote upcoming specialty crop events. Yr 2: Followers Facebook-2,839 (533 new); Instagram- 290 (79 new); YouTube- 178. 2.7K Views Yr 2 Reach: Facebook-196,507 with 12,121 page visits; Instagram- 3,132 with 258 profile visits.	Objective 1 Objective 2 Objective 3
-	15	Newsletters SDSPA provides education information for specialty crop producers, buyers, consumers and other supporters through our monthly e-Newsletter. During this grant period 12 newsletter were distributed and 12,419 contacts reached. All newsletters were also available on our website and posted on social media. In Yr 2-12 newsletter were distributed and 5,940 contacts reached. Feedback- "Just wanted to say your newsletters continue to be very very well done. Thank you for all the information!" - Timothy Schoonhoven, SD DANR. 6/3/24 SDSPA launched our 'Upcoming Events' distribution in June, 2024. In Yr 3, 12 issues were distributed reaching 11,260. Four were prepared during Yr 2 reaching 2,261 contacts.	Objective 1 Objective 2 Objective 3
-	16	Other Direct Outreach SDSPA provides specialty crops production & business development info, networking & partnership opportunities, & provides awareness of locally-produced specialty crops through Mailchimp blasts. Year 3 lists includes 1220 (623 new) subscribers, producers, buyers, consumers & other supporters of local food systems in SD. Year 2 lists included 597 (128 new) contacts. Year 3 SDSPA consistently distributed clickable upcoming event lists to our Google Groups (Farmers Markets, Flower & Producer Growers, Mentorship) and partners (LF Coalition, SDSU Extension, NRCS) to increase event awareness every 4-6 weeks. "Thanks for sending this out! This format was easy to copy/paste into an email to our vendors" -Brookings FM We reach out to new & renewing members annually through a 3-phase marketing email campaign to help producers & supporters aware of available resources, process for website & directory participation, social media, event promotion, & project involvement. (Yr 3-136, Yr 2- 150 recipients) SDSPA manages outreach lists for direct communication with a media (newspaper, radio, television, community calendar) distribution list of 287 (6 new) contacts	Objective 1 Objective 2 Objective 3

-	17	Website: In Year 3 Specialty Crop educational information was shared on our website with 58 features & news articles, 4 new photo galleries, & 69 calendar events. Content additions/enhancements were made to many pages including: About Us, Bees/Honey, Berries, Beverages, Chapters, Farm to School, Farmers Markets, Flowers/Plants, Grapes, Herbs, Homepage, Hops, LF Directory form, Melons, Microgreens, Mushrooms, Nuts, Orchard, Retailers, Value Added & Vegetables. Resource page/post edits including: Group pages for Flower, Farmers Markets, Fruit & Veg, & Mentorship created. SCBG Program page. Business/Marketing Resources, Economic resources, Christmas Tree Directory, Fruits is Fun Campaign updates, Updated Aggregation Guides updated-2, job board listings-3 16 resources were added to our resource library collections including, aggregation, business development (workforce, financing, sales tax, profitability), berries, farmers markets, flowers, grapes, herbs, seed starting, marketing. In year 2 & 3 our website had 29,272 active users with 85,901 page views, 2.93 views/active user and an avg. engagement of 58 sec.	Objective 1 Objective 2 Objective 3
-	18	Online Producer Directory In Yr 3, 8 new specialty crop producers were added to our Local Foods Directory. Each listing in the directory provides an access point for contact, website, social media links, products linking and a Google Map pin on the corresponding specialty crop page. Upkeep occurred on existing listings. Near the end of the grant period SDSPA transitioned to a new directory and mapping tool to better accommodate growing producer listings. 98 specialty crop producer listings were redirected to the new site. In response to annual upkeep producer responded "Thanks for staying on top of marketing details." -Greg Stach, Lewis & Clark Vineyard In Yr 2, 23 specialty crop producers were added to our Local Foods Directory.	Objective 1 Objective 2 Objective 3
-	18	Farmers Market Directory Annual update of the S.D. Farmers Market Directory makes it the most current and accurate online listing for markets in the state. In year 3, three new markets were added for a total of 51 markets. In year 2, two new farmers markets were added to the statewide list, totaling 48 markets. (Increased by 1 in 2024)	Objective 1 Objective 2 Objective 3
-	19	Mailing In Year 3 SDSPA sent out a mailing to 1200 SD Producers and stakeholders to share about the resources developed within this grant.	Objective 1 Objective 2 Objective 3

CHALLENGES AND DEVELOPMENTS (REQUIRED)

Provide any challenges to the completion of your project or any positive developments outside of the project's original intent that you experienced during this reporting period. Also, provide the corrective actions you took to address these issues. If you did not attain an approved objective, outcome(s), and/or indicator(s), provide an explanation in the Corrective Actions column. For developments, you may put "N/A" under Corrective Actions. Additional challenges/developments may be added as needed.

+	#	Challenge or Development (1,200 char.)	Corrective Action
-	1	Year 3: Indicator 2.1 c, technical knowledge gained through event attendance was 300 short.	The other methods to meet this indicator, educational trainings and website users well exceeded SDSPAs indicator goals. Overall the indicator 2.1 was exceeded by 3402. In Year 2 and 3 SDSPA worked to target industry events and programming that were geared more towards technical knowledge.

-	2	Year 3: With the grant funding reimbursement uncertainties in early 2025, there were periods where contractor hours and travel decreased based on the comfortability of contractors and the SDSPA board.	The SDSPA board made policy that all travel expenses were the responsibility of the contractor until reimbursement. While this was an important decision for SDSPA as a whole, it was not feasible to have heavy travel in the 3rd quarter which is usually very event and travel heavy. This impacted both travel and contractual dollars that would have been spent on the events.
-	3	Year 3: Our latest amendment allowed travel dollars to be spent on board members and producers. This was a challenge when events were not well attended by those groups. For example, though many producers attended, no board members were able to make Value Added Ag Day. Despite having many interested producers, none attended the Fittest on the Farm event Sept. 21.	Going forward SDSPA will likely not participate in Sunday events or events that require a large time commitment from producers.
-	4	Year 3: The Farmers Market Coalition has a state partnership to the National Farmers Market Coalition for all coalition members to use. The National coalition is operating at a limited capacity and has not responded to SDSPAs inquires regarding members not being able to access the resources.	SDSPA continued to attempt communications with the National coalition and update the SD coalition. SDSPA will reconsider using the NFMC unless communication is restored.
-	5	Year 2: Attendance and participation in the SD Farmers Market Coalition has been low throughout the spring and summer of 2023.	SDSPA contractor decided to move the meetings to quarterly and have a larger agenda. At the first quarterly meeting there were 11 attendees, the largest group since the low attendance.
-	6	Year 1: SDSPA Farmers Market Coalition meeting attendance began to dwindle in summer 2023.	SDSPA sent out a survey to all Farmers Market Coalition members. The results (linked here) showed that those who completed the survey feel the monthly meetings are valuable and helpful, and while the time is as good as any for them, some months they simply cannot make it work.
-	7	Year 1: Our existing project/events contractor has taken a new position.	Hiring for a new contractor occurred and that individual is now in place to manage the projects for the next grant period

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES (REQUIRED FOR ANNUAL REPORTS)

Provide a description of the activities that you are planning to complete during the next reporting period. Additional activities can be added as needed. Please note, if this is a final report there should be no upcoming activities associated with the project, and this section should be left blank.

+	#	Activity (600 char.)	Anticipated Completion
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LESSON LEARNED (REQUIRED FOR FINAL REPORTS)

The recipient or subrecipient is required to provide recommendations or advice that others may use to improve their performance in implementing similar projects. If this is an annual report, please skip this section. (1200 char.)

If completing a project dependent on producer participation or speakers, stipends / payment in the budget and planning well in advance are critical.

We have noted better reach/attendance when we can promote events with paid ads on social media. Including this in the budget is a priority when budgets allow.

CONTINUATION AND DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS (REQUIRED FOR FINAL REPORTS)

Describe your plans for continuing the project (sustainability; capacity building) and/or disseminating the project results. If this is an annual report, please skip this section. (1200 char.)

During this project we have created wonderful networks of producers that we hope enjoy to continue connecting and networking through our subchapters and Facebook groups. They are formatted in a way where producers can ask questions and initiate and guide discussions. SDSPA's administrative support of gathering educational needs, coordinating trainings, and prompting discussions allows producers to focus on learning.

The activities and specialty crop booth supplies created through this funding will continue to serve the specialty crop industry as part of SDSPA's display at many future events.

Throughout this funding we have developed extensive resources between our podcast, youtube channel, and web resources and directories that will continue to serve producers and consumers.

PROJECT BENEFICIARIES (REQUIRED FOR FINAL REPORTS)

Provide the number of project beneficiaries. If this is an annual report, please skip this section. (12 char.)

465,957

FEDERAL PROJECT EXPENDITURE

EXPENDITURE (REQUIRED)

You must respond to at least one cost category. Please note, the subtotal and total rows include formulas to auto-calculate totals. The approved budget should come from the accepted project plan or any approved budget amendments.

Cost Category	Amount Approved in Budget	Actual Federal Expenditures (Federal Funds Only)
Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fringe Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00
Travel	\$8,677.50	\$6,176.43
Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00

Supplies	\$9,959.25	\$9,959.28
Contractual	\$78,051.00	\$75,033.41
Other	\$5,200.00	\$5,200.00
Direct Costs Sub-Total	\$101,887.75	\$96,369.12
Indirect Costs	\$8,859.80	\$8,859.80
Project Expenditure Total Federal Costs	\$110,747.55	\$105,228.92

DISCUSSION OF EXPENDITURES (REQUIRED)

For 1st Annual Reports, if total project expenditures is less than 30 percent, and for 2nd Annual Reports, if total project expenditures is less than 60 percent, include a statement explaining how the grant funds will be expended and project activities completed as planned by the end date on the grant agreement. Any state approved budget amendments should be included here; include the line item that the funds are coming from and going to, as well as the date that the state approved the budget amendment. (1,200 char.)

January 8 2025 Amendment -

Travel Trip 2: allow SDSPA to reimburse producers as well as contractors and board members for attendance at industry events when representing the specialty crop industry of South Dakota to increase producer participation.

Other Line #3 - Expanded educator stipend availability to include in-person events, virtual education, trainings, and networking events.

SD DANR approved the move of \$1033 of Other budget funds meant for Zoom (Other #2) to the stipends (Other #3), which did not rise to the level requiring a formal amendment with USDA.

June 2023 Amendment -

Remove travel, contractual, and other funds related to the SD Local Foods Conference.

Move contractual to other for podcast guest stipends.

PROGRAM INCOME (IF APPLICABLE)

If program income was earned on the project, grant recipients are required to report on the source, amount, and how funds were expended. Program income is gross income --earned by a recipient or subrecipient under a grant --directly generated by the grant-supported activity or earned only because of the grant agreement during the grant period of performance. Program income includes, but is not limited to, income from fees for services performed; the sale of commodities or items fabricated under an award (this includes items sold at cost if the cost of producing the item was funded in whole or partially with grant funds); registration fees for conferences, etc.

+	Source/Nature of Program Income (100 char.)	Amount Approved in Budget	Actual Amount Earned
-		\$0.00	\$0.00

USE OF PROGRAM INCOME (IF APPLICABLE)

Describe how the earned program income was used to further the objectives of this project during the performance period. Any income generated must be reinvested back into the project and not set aside or reserved for future expenses after the grant ends. (1,200 char.)

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PPR ATTACHMENTS DESCRIPTION (IF APPLICABLE)

Grantors will rely on the data that is submitted in this form when they report to congress. However, if you think additional documents are necessary to support PPR, please attach then and provide a document name and description of document below.

+	Document Name	Document Description
-		