

Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative  
Winneshiek County Planning Team  
Feb. 20, 2008  
Meeting Minutes

**PRESENT:** Brenda Balk, Lorraine Borowski, Katie Bril, Ron Bullerman, David Cavagnaro, Johnice Cross, Dean Darling, Donella Darrington, Rick Edwards, Lindsay Erdman, Jo Ann Hagen, Jeanett Hansen, Manney Haylan, Stephanie Hughes, Jenn Kuehner, Janet Lambert, Lyle Luzum, Sue Luzum, Kate Mansfield, Ann Mansfield, Alison McClain, Mary Meyer, Marissa Nordschow, Lyle Otte, Janelle Pavlovec, Betty Ransom, Brenda Ranum, Liz Rog, Erick Sessions, Randy Uhl and Julie Wurtzel.

**SHARING:** During introductions and sharing the following food and fitness related items were mentioned:

- A community garden across the dike on the Upper Iowa River across from Decorah High School is being planned
- A weight management program at a reduced rate for employees is being offered at Winneshiek Medical Center
- Local people are participating in Lighten Up Iowa
- Walkable/Bikable maps of the Prairie Farmer Recreational Trail are being completed
- Youth Team surveys are being conducted about concession stand sales at high school sports events
- Outdoor recreation is being promoted by Winneshiek County Conservation
- Howard County is interested in starting a food coop in Cresco
- The Decorah Public Library has held discussions of the book “Animal, Vegetable, Miracle”

**REGIONAL TEAM:** Kate Mansfield reported that the Youth Team is conducting assessments about the foods sold in concession stands at local high school sporting events. The assessments are being conducted by Youth Team members in all five FFI counties. Kate also reported that five Youth Team members will be traveling to a Youth Leadership Networking meeting March 14-16 in Tucson, Az.

**FIVE-COUNTY ASSESSMENT:** Rick Edwards reported that the Regional Team is getting some traction with its Plan of Work and that budget work is continuing. He also reported that Jane Schadle of the Iowa Department of Public Health presented information on a regional Community Health Assessment led by the county Public Health departments. The five PH departments are proposing a common assessment which will allow them to assess the status of their county and allow them to compare to others and look at regional trends.

**YEAR 1 & 2 Plan of Work:** The Regional Team also reviewed the Plan of Work for Years 1 & 2. Their comments included:

- There is a need for education about the planning process and a need for education about the implementation process (the community needs to be thinking about the system instead of projects.)
- Some systems, such as schools, are hard to change. Schools may need 3-5 years to see system change; they need to be engaged now to see change in the next 5-8 years

**YEAR 1&2 Budget:** After the meeting, Regional Team members found out that carry over funds from Year 1 could be used in Year 2. The budget will be revised in the next month or two to reflect the Team's goals.

**WORK GROUPS:** The Regional Team formed the following work groups, which will meet primarily via phone and e-mail:

- Vision Deployment Matrix & System Thinking
- June conference planning
- Communication planning
- Community health assessments
- Youth assessments
- Underserved & minorities

**WEBCAST:** "Building A Local Food System, Part 2 – What Have We Learned?" Participants viewed a 16-minute web cast about food systems in NE Iowa and then broke into small discussion groups. They were asked:

- What did you learn from this information? Did you hear anything new?
- What are the assets and strengths for our area toward developing a local food system?
- Are we missing any information in this picture?

The following comments were made by the groups after discussing the web cast

**WHAT DID YOU LEARN?**

- There seems to be a lack of food sources in Howard County
- We produce food here, ship it out, and then bring in food from elsewhere
- The percentage of food consumed outside the home is higher than previously thought
- The percentage of organic food grown in Winneshiek County is higher than previously thought

**ASSETS AND STRENGTHS FOR OUR AREA:**

- We have many smaller farms and more diverse crops than the rest of the state
- The new co-op building shows the strength of locally grown food consumption
- The Food & Fitness Initiative itself is a considered an asset for the area
- The age of the farmers – as younger ones take over, they may be more willing to trying different farming methods

- We have large segments of the population seeking locally-grown foods, and that percentage is continuing to climb

**ARE WE MISSING ANY INFORMATION?**

- Commodities in the school are challenged with storage issues
- There aren't enough foods processed locally
- We have a lack of information about food production by the Amish
- We need more food preparation education
- How much money spent in non-locally owned restaurants goes out of the area?