

NE Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative
Fayette County Planning Team Meeting Minutes
March 20th, 2008
4:00, ISU Extension Office, Fayette

Attendees: Deb Kahler, Barb Ashby, Sheryl Struthers, Donna Story, Maureen Johnson, Vicki Rowland, Dave Runyon, Joe Organist, Karla Organist, Dan Burkhart, Scot Michelson, Rod Marlatt, Richard Witt, Alice Moeller, Dave Lenz, Ruth Schemmel, Martha Bartenhagen, Sue Burrack, Meghan Powers, Karen Keele Kober, Katherine McCarville, Gale Bishop.

1. Committee Members Shared discussions, projects or grants related to the Food & Fitness Initiative (FFI):
 - Heard a report on Public Health's baseline survey progress in the 5 county region
 - Oelwein Early Childhood Fair tested the BMI for ages 2 and up – preliminary reports are showing most were of normal weight!
 - Enjoyed a meal of chili and corn muffins. Featuring grass fed beef from Rock Cedar Ranch near Decorah, and the last jars of homemade tomato sauce!
 - Volunteered to serve as the temporary Vice Chair of the Fayette County Trail Committee.
 - Oelwein Lion's Club recently spent time doing sight screening in several local schools for Iowa Kids Sight – a state program that has screened over 100,000 children!
 - Fayette County Landfill will be accepting computers and other computer accessories on a FREE recycling day on May 3.
 - Raises drug free pork and hopes to increase local sales. Looking into hydroponics business.
 - Recommended the book "Contrary Farmer" by Gene Logsdon.
 - Baked some dried split pea bars w/ raisins which were surprisingly delicious!
 - Shared information on an article from the London Times where a community is paying children to eat healthy foods!
 - Shared a story from Good Morning America about how corn is in nearly everything we eat and that some experts are now suspecting that it may be contributing to our health problems.
 - Oelwein FFA is interested in setting up a hydroponics lab.
 - Recommended the book "Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life" by Barbara Kingsolver.
 - Heard a progress on the GIS class that is mapping the walkable/bikable communities. Received a CLEAR grant to clean a 4 mile stretch of the Turkey River from Clermont to Elgin on April 19th at 8:30 a.m. They are also looking for a group that may be willing to clean the Oelwein Lake under this umbrella. If you are interested in helping contact Kata at: mccarvillek@uiu.edu.
 - Reporting on our progress in the Newspapers of Fayette County.
 - 2 students from our county that went to Arizona as part of a group of 5 students from our region. On a scale of 1-10, they reported their experience as being a 9.9+! They will be making a presentation on their experience to our group in one of the coming months.
 - Shared a draft of the Echo Valley Trail System.
 - Shared a lesson plan that was recently presented to the Valley Schools on Place-Based Education. Volga River Trail Cleanup will be held on April 26th, and that anyone interested in helping should meet at the Ranger's Station at 8 or 8:30 a.m.
 - Busy collecting all newspaper clippings from the county about FFI.
 - Fayette County Trail Committee has been "adopted" by the RC&D as a project!
 - Race America Kids will be running all 99 counties in Iowa this year. She expects that 30 kids will take part in this 10 day event.
 - Wrote a grant proposal for TEA-21 and were awarded \$27,000 towards their bridge project.
 - There will be a pancake breakfast fundraiser for Hidden Valley Park on Mar. 30th at the Elgin Legion.
2. Regional F & F Leadership Team Report:
 - Scot told the Fayette Team about all of the work groups that the Regional Team has formed:
 - Resource Work Group: Deal with the budget and additional fundraising
 - School Work Group: We need a representative for this group – John Johnson from West Central was recommended.
 - Minority Group
 - Youth Group: Have been working on a concession stand survey which will be presented in a future meeting.
 - Conference Group: Do we want a booth at the fair? Maybe we just want to have a table in the Health Fair on Thursday night – if we do, we need to reserve a table soon.
 - Communication Group: Are working on an "elevator statement" for committee members to use when they are questions about FFI.

NE Iowa F&F Initiative Goal

To create community environments that support healthy children, youth, and families by making available and promoting the procurement and consumption of local healthy food and the creation of space and structures for physical activity and play.

- Built Environment Group: is working on a comprehensive inventory of our parks, facilities, trails and public areas – they may be looking for volunteers.
- NIFF Coalition: Dan gave some updates on the Food & Farm Coalition. Producers are facing 3 levels of produce: level 1 is for the perfect and fresh produce that can be sold direct to consumer, level 2 is for the slightly blemished produce that can be utilized by institutions, and level 3 is that produce that needs to be processed into a value-added product. He will be attending a National Food Gathering in Arizona hosted by the Kellogg Foundation in April.
- Vision Deployment Matrix Work Group: Is working on our Vision Statement. Scot asked for feedback on the following: **NE Iowa is a unique place where all residents and guests of every age experience, celebrate and promote healthy locally grown food with abundant opportunities for physical activity and play EVERY DAY. Healthier people make stronger families and communities.**
- Sue gave an update of the school wellness policy visits. The School Wellness Policy Review Team met with about 15 staff from Starmont, their summaries should be available soon. Preliminary findings show that there are many good policies in place, but implementation is lacking.

Webcasts & Discussion: "Building a Local Food System, Part 3 – Planning For Our Future"

Question: What bold steps might we choose to grow the food, make it accessible and promote consumption of the local foods?

- Need cooperation among producers to avoid overproduction of products.
- Community Gardens
- Year Round Farmers Market
- More Processing and storage
- Inspected cooperative kitchens
- What about the labor we may need to bring this up to the scale needed to feed all of us?
- Producers need to be able to produce, we need entrepreneurs to process or sell – these are specialty areas that need to be nurtured and developed.

Question 2: What conversation can you take to others you know that will help create new possibilities around local healthy foods for our future in NE Iowa?

- Is there anyone who can organize efforts?
- Should the county try to pursue a policy similar to Woodbury's only focusing on "local", not just "organic"
- Can our school cooks cook? At the Catholic School in Oelwein, they serve fresh food and cook everyday –it's not a "heat and eat" – if they can do it, why can't all of our schools do it?
- Individually, we can impact the food that is served daily in our homes, churches and other organizations and events.
- Can we foster the grocer/producer relationship? Many people would purchase local foods over non-local.
- Can we encourage investors to invest in Main Street, not Wall Street?

Next Meeting: April 17, 2008. 4:00 – 6:00, ISU Extension Office.

NE Iowa F&F Initiative Goal

To create community environments that support healthy children, youth, and families by making available and promoting the procurement and consumption of local healthy food and the creation of space and structures for physical activity and play.