

June 24, 2008

This electronic newsletter about the NE IA Food & Fitness Initiative will be sent to team members and other interested parties. It is intended to provide current information to its readers. Items may be submitted to [wiemer@iastate.edu](mailto:wiemer@iastate.edu). Archived editions: [www.extension.iastate.edu/allamakee/info/enews.htm](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/allamakee/info/enews.htm)

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**JUNE 2008 – ONE FOR THE RECORD BOOKS**

As we put a close on this crazy month of June 2008, it is time to catch up on the latest news from the NE IA Food & Fitness Initiative. This edition of the E-newsletter has been cued to send several times and then something major would change the content. I better get it sent out before anything else changes!  
Teresa

**FLOODING & FARMING**

**DISASTER RELIEF FOR FAMILY FARMERS** Midwestern family farmers have been hit with historic levels of storm and flood damage this spring. Without federal crop insurance, farmers who produce local foods for market are especially vulnerable. In a year when demand for locally grown foods is at its highest, many towns' farmers' markets have closed down due to flooding or product shortages. "We have been hearing from family farmers all across the state who have been devastated by storms and flooding," said coalition spokesperson Denise O'Brien, an Atlantic farmer. "We want to get assistance to these farmers as quickly as possible, and we thank our long-time friends at Farm Aid for helping us out." [Click here](#) to make a donation in support of relief efforts in Iowa and across the Midwest.

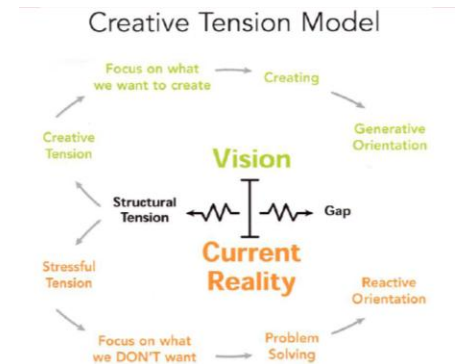


Flooding of the Upper Iowa River between Dorchester and New Albin.

**QUESTIONS ABOUT FOOD SAFETY?** [Click here](#) for information on safety guidelines for flood damaged produce. For other resources and information on flood recovery [visit this site from ISU Extension](#).

**WHAT'S NEW WITH FFI?** The Regional Team minutes from May 28 are posted to [www.iowafoodandfitness.org](http://www.iowafoodandfitness.org). Highlights from that meeting:

- The FFI has a new logo. Watch for displays at county events this summer!
- 18 Regional Team members and support staff are currently in Michigan at the FFI Networking Meeting in Detroit, Michigan. They are learning and sharing with WKKF staff and members of the other 9 FFI communities.
- The Year 1 Report is complete—all 26 pages. [Click here](#) to read about all the exciting results from the first year of the initiative.
- The NE IA FFI is using the Creative Tension Model to help us in our planning. The model (right) is [posted at this site](#).



### COUNTY PLANNING MEETINGS WILL DISCUSS POLICY AND SYSTEM CHANGE

After being rained out in June, the county planning teams will be looking at policy and system change at their July meetings. During the planning period of the Food & Fitness Initiative, the nine collaboratives across the country are creating community action plans to influence policy and practice so that everyone can be active and have access to healthy and affordable food. The community action plans will focus on improving the policies, practices and systems that determine how food arrives on our table and how our communities are built.

Long-lasting and sustainable change in these areas requires systems change driven by new and improved policies. While programs can – and often do – lead to changes in individuals and/or communities, unless they are scaled up and instituted through formal policies, they will not be long-lasting and sustainable.

Everyone in the region has a role in policy development. County team members will discuss their role in changing the current system and policies at this monthly meeting which is part of the Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative. Our vision is to make Northeast Iowa a unique place where all residents and guests experience, celebrate and promote healthy locally grown food with abundant opportunities for physical activity and play EVERY DAY. Healthier people make stronger families and vibrant communities.

The agenda is posted to [www.iowafoodandfitness.org](http://www.iowafoodandfitness.org). County meetings are scheduled on these dates:

July 10: Clayton County Planning Team, Clayton County Extension, Elkader, 6-8 pm.

July 16: Allamakee County Planning Team, 4:15-6 pm, Dining Center at Waukon Wellness Center.

July 16: Howard County Planning Team, Cresco Hospital, 6-8 pm.

July 16: Winneshiek County Planning Team, 4:30-6:30 pm, Decorah City Hall Meeting Room.

July 17: Fayette County Planning Team, 4-6 pm, Fayette County Extension office.

July 23: Regional Planning Team meeting, 11 am to 2 pm, Decorah City Hall.

### CHECK OUT THESE POLICIES...

**WOODBURY COUNTY LOCAL FOODS PROGRAM** -- <http://www.woodburyorganics.com>

Woodbury County has initiated a comprehensive effort to revitalize the community through innovative agricultural practices with a focus on connecting local foods producers to commercial, school and residential consumers. The National Association of Counties awarded Woodbury County's efforts in 2007 with one of only ten national Center for Sustainable Communities awards for this innovative program that provides a variety of incentives to increase both the supply and demand for local foods.

**JAPAN WANTS PEOPLE TO SLIM DOWN** Waist-measurement law, designed to promote better health, draws protests. Japan, a country not known for its overweight people, has started one of the most ambitious campaigns ever undertaken by a nation to slim down its citizenry. [Read more...](#)

**FUEL EFFICIENCY** As fuel prices continue to rise along with interest in local foods, consumers and farmers alike are looking for options that will decrease their fuel use. A new Leopold Center study looked at which transportation option consumed less fuel and emitted less carbon dioxide: farmer delivery or customer pick-up of food products for an Iowa Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) enterprise. According to the report, weekly farmer distribution (using a four-door hybrid compact car) used 2.77 times less fuel than customer pick-up using average U.S. passenger vehicle efficiency. [Read the report](#) on the Leopold Center web site.

**COME TO THE FARM!** Summer means field days, and there will be plenty of opportunities to see what's happening on Iowa farms. Since 1999, the Leopold Center has provided direct support to Practical Farmers of Iowa (PFI) for its on-farm research demonstration and field day program. The Leopold Center also participates in the Iowa Learning Farm project, a statewide initiative that includes farmer cooperators, agency partners and ISU researchers to build a "culture of conservation" in Iowa. [Check our web events calendar](#) for details.

**FOOD SUPPLY CHAINS** Where are the opportunities for local producers who want to enter the food supply chain? Where in the supply chain hold the greatest value? The answer depends upon the product, and a new series of Leopold Center fact sheets looks at frozen fruits and vegetables, fresh pork and sausage products. The information was gathered as part of a Leopold Center marketing project. [Download and view the fact sheets](#) .

**DIRECT MARKET SALES** [Three new publications](#) target farmers and foodservice buyers and how they can better work together. "What Producers Should Know About Selling to Local Foodservice Markets," "What Retail Foodservices Should Know When Purchasing Local Produce Directly from Farmers," and "Buying Local Foods for Retail Foodservices" are in the "Other Resources" section of the Leopold Center Marketing Initiative web page.

**DISAPPEARING MIDDLE** The Agriculture of the Middle (AOTM) project has generated a new book published by MIT Press, *Food and the Mid-Level Farm: Renewing an Agriculture of the Middle*, edited by Thomas Lyson, Steve Stevenson and Rick Welsh. More about the project at the Association of Family Farms web site, <http://www.familyfood.net>.

**RESEARCH SHOWS LOW-INPUT FARMING SYSTEMS BENEFIT FARMERS, ENVIRONMENT** Iowa State researchers are investigating the potential of diversified, low-input farming systems to benefit both farmers and the environment while reducing on-farm energy use. Results from an ongoing research project funded by the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture show that certain systems can be productive and profitable. [Read more...](#)

**WEST UNION SELECTED FOR "GREEN" PILOT PROJECT** The Iowa Department of Economic Development's (IDED) announced that West Union, a Main Street community, was selected as one of two cities to participate in a "green" initiatives pilot project to create best practices and serve as models for other communities to become more environmentally friendly. The community will receive technical assistance, training, and financial incentives from IDED to complete a new, environmentally responsible

and innovative streetscape. For more information, about IDEED's green initiatives, visit [www.iowalifechanging.com/community](http://www.iowalifechanging.com/community)

**START SMART YOUTH PROGRAM** Storm Lake, Iowa has started a program for kids and adults to get moving more. Iowa community's Start Smart programs are meeting kids' needs. Start Smart provided Storm Lake parents with exactly what they were looking for - a program for their young children to learn sports in a safe and pressure-free environment. Children love the program as well, especially since they get to participate with mom or dad. [Click here](#) to read the entire article on the Start Smart program.

**SHARE YOUR NEWS!** If you have a news item, photo or event you would like to share with the 300+ people involved in the NE IA FFI, send the information to Teresa Wiemerslage at [wiemer@iastate.edu](mailto:wiemer@iastate.edu).