



Iowa DOT updated their Iowa bike map from 2005. [2008 Transportation Map for Bicyclists](#)

### The fattest and thinnest states in America

Roughly a quarter of all adults, split roughly evenly between men and women, are obese, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Mississippi, home of the mud-pie, is the fattest state in the union, with nearly a third of its residents considered obese. Adults in the northeast and the West are among the leanest, but trim Colorado is the only state with less than a fifth of adults reckoned to be obese, perhaps because of the hiking trails, high altitude and outdoors lifestyle. [Read more.](#)



### NACo launches Healthy Counties Database

The National Association of Counties today announced the release of the Healthy Counties Database, a new resource containing more than 100 profiles of model policies, programs and initiatives that counties nationwide enacted to prevent childhood obesity. The database is designed to help county officials promote healthy living by improving the health of their environments. Each individual profile includes a brief description of the practice, county demographics, contact information, funding sources and additional resources. [Visit the database.](#)

### Healthy Celebrations Resource

The USDA Food & Nutrition Service has a new resource entitled [Create Healthy, Active Celebrations!](#) It offers ideas to parents and caregivers on ways to make healthy eating and physical activity experiences part of special events, celebrations and everyday meals.

**Fresh produce in elementary schools** - The 2008 farm bill amended the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act by adding the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, which replaces a previous program in a limited number of states, and expands fresh fruits and vegetables to selected schools in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. [Read more.](#)

### Supermarket Chain Narrows its Sights – Wal-Mart goes local

Last month Wal-Mart announced that it plans to spend \$400 million this year on locally grown produce, making it the largest player in that market. “When Wal-Mart makes a major effort to reach out to local food systems, it’s a major signal,” said Gus Schumacher Jr., a consultant to the nonprofit Kellogg Foundation and a former Massachusetts commissioner of food and agriculture, who has worked to introduce farmers to restaurateurs and retailers since the 1980s. [Read More.](#)

### Flood Comments

In an address on June 20, 2008, Craig Lang, President of the Iowa Farm Bureau Foundation talked about the 2008 floods as a “disaster of historic proportions.” In the speech, he identified two examples of farmers putting their community first—including the farmers in Decorah.

A farmer in Sidney, Iowa alerted townspeople that the nearby water treatment plant was in jeopardy by the rising Nishnabotna River. He told them to cut the levee by his soybean field and flood it, so the water treatment plant would be saved. They did – and the river flowed – right over his crop.

In Decorah, livestock farmers concerned for the safety of their town from the rising Upper Iowa River, brought in their manure pumps and hooked them up to the flooded streets. They ran their manure

pumps, over 24 hours, and each cleared out over 200,000 gallons of water per minute. This bought Decorah residents time to sandbag and save their town. [Read the entire speech.](#)

### Local Food Systems Reading Room

The National Agriculture Law Center has a new resource. The [Local Food Systems Reading Room](#) includes:

- An overview of Local Food Systems
- A list of major statues such as the Farmer-to-Consumer Direct
- A large list of regulations to include items such as Food Stamp & Food Distribution Program etc.
- Research Publications
- A huge list of reference resources
- Links to pertinent Food Systems websites

### Iowa Schools Fail To Meet Agricultural Industry's Needs

Iowa schools are not doing enough to help students learn about and become involved in careers in agricultural and life sciences, according to a review of educational programs by the Governor's Council on Agricultural Education. "Most middle school and high school students have no knowledge of the food, fiber and natural resource industry in this state, let alone the huge number of careers available," said Robert Martin, chair of the council who is a professor and chair of the Department of Agricultural Education and Studies at Iowa State. [Read more.](#)

### Best Practices Workshop Proceedings Available

Experiences within each Value Chains Partnerships (VCP) Community of Practice (CoP) have elicited many hard questions and produced some hard-won answers. The Best Practices Workshop, held April 3, 2008, allowed key stakeholders from each CoP to share the know-how, lessons learned, and successfully-demonstrated practices innate to other citizens and supporters of VCP. It was intended not so much as a conference but more as a town meeting for a community of practitioners dedicated to the success of values-based food and agriculture businesses. [Read the report.](#)

### Cost of Food Websites...

Check out a [new website](#) explaining the costs that go into food, available at courtesy of the Texas corn, wheat, and peanut producers' associations. *Source: Brownfield Network, July 22.*

### [Farmers Share of the Food Dollar](#) (National Farmers Union resource)

Ever wonder how much of your food dollar actually goes to the farmer? Take a guess at the farmer's share of the following items purchased at your typical conventional grocery store. [Read more.](#)

Labor takes the biggest chunk of the food dollar

