

NE Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative – Allamakee County

The Allamakee County Food & Fitness Planning team met on January 21, 2009 at the Allamakee County Extension office at 4:30 pm. Attendees: Teresa Wiemerslage, Lana Snitker, Mary Koopman, Dave Schmelzer, Janel Clark, Rachelle Howe, Caroll Schreiber, Alaine Meier.

Introductions were made. Members shared their vision for the future.

Lana and Mary gave the update on the Regional Team meeting.

The group watched the video, “Rising Energy and Food prices” and discussed the following questions.

How will our vision and strategies make a difference in the lives of vulnerable children and their families?

- If kids can get one (or two) good meals a day at school, it will have an impact. Over 70% of the children in Postville receive free or reduced lunch. It is suspected that some of those children do not get meals at home.
- It will be hard to achieve this.
- We need to look at all school meals.
- How do you get people to make the choice to be healthier?
 - Suggest using older people in the community to mentor and help (gardening, canning, etc)
 - Reach the youth with their peers (children dealing with diabetes, teen athletes)
 - The messengers will be important.
 - Human contact is going to be the most effective.

What resources do we have in our community to address these issues?

- Food Shelf
- County Relief
- NE IA Community Action
- Community gardens in Postville, Waukon and Harpers Ferry
- Farmers Markets in Waukon and Harpers Ferry
- Active Master Gardeners
- Strong FFA program with greenhouse

How can we help the NIFF Coalition and Regional School Work Group ensure equity around food and physical activity for families in our communities?

- Promote the Community gardens and farmers markets
- Get the FM certified to accept WIC and Senior Coupons for fruits and veggies.
- Encourage the schools to get involved.

Meeting adjourned at 6 pm.