

Northeast Iowa Food & Farm Coalition Minutes

Members of the NIFF Coalition met on March 29, 2007 at noon at the Winneshiek County Extension office. Present: Dan Burkhart, Don Arendt, Eric Nordschow, Brenda Ranum, Teresa Wiemerslage, Lyle Luzem, Charlie Baier, Liz Rog, Randy Uhl, Dennis Hovden, Larry and Diane Grimstad, Ann Mansfield, Vince Spain, Mary Steen.

Assessment Committee Update:

Institutional Survey – Craig will present the data to NIFF members on May 15 at 7:30 pm at the Dairy Center in Calmar. We hope to have about 5 people from each county attend to review the data.

Household Consumer Survey Update –Over 140 surveys were returned. (Allamakee, 79; Clayton, 104; Fayette, 124; Howard, 80; Winneshiek, 65) Goal of 100 per county. They will collect surveys for one more week. We should have a report by May.

Asset Mapping –Being compiled.

Economic Analysis –Craig Chase will work with Dave and we may need to hire Angie Tagtow (private consultant and former dietician for the Iowa Dept. of Public Health) to analyze data and connect to the new food pyramid.

Base-Line Survey – Data is being collected from Institutions through the Institutional Survey. Craig will be able pull this data out in February when all the Institutional Survey data is entered. We will focus on 3-5 businesses.

Barriers/Challenges/Policy Committee – In April a committee (Don Elsbernd, Rich Lukes, Eric N) will be formed to start looking at barriers (local, state, and national) to growing and distributing food. A discussion piece will be sent through email to ask for feedback.

Education Committee Update:

Presentations:

Summary of NIFF Report to RFSWG, March 9, 2007

- NIFF representatives: Brenda Ranum, Al Peake, Teresa Wiemerslage
- The group heard reports from the 3 pilot projects in the state.
- **SE IA (Jefferson, Van Buren, Davis counties)** They have invited Ken Meter to talk and are working on getting their group ready for strategic planning.
- **SW IA (Adair, Adams, Audubon, Cass, Guthrie, Montgomery, Pottawattamie, Shelby)**
 - Ken Meter will be speaking to groups in their counties.
 - They are working with the Cass County Hospital to offer local foods
 - They have funding success from the Wallace Foundation and Iowa West Foundation
 - They have a nice pub on regional food system facts:
<http://www.wallacefdn.org/Harrisdale.html>
- **NE IA –NIFF**
 - We updated them on our project.
 - We talked about the barrier of road signage and the experience of some producers trying to market their farm.
 - As a result of our discussion, the resources page on our website has been updated with the links of these groups and other resources.
- Interesting updates from the RFSWG meeting:
 - SE group has information on a grant to serve local snacks in school
 - Farm Bureau has crop and farmers market insurance for producers (sounded like a new program)
 - On April 13, the American Society of Hospital Food Service Operators will be offering a webcast on using local foods in hospitals
 - NIFF needs to get our producers registered on the Market Maker website from ISU:
<http://ia.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/index.asp>

- **NICC Community Outreach Portal Update** –Lyle Luzum and Teresa Wiemerslage gave lessons and updates to Coalition members prior to the February meeting– This web site can provide the following collaboration tools to the NIFF Coalition: message boards/discussion forums, calendars, task lists, address books, file storage, web bookmarks, and chat
- **Update on State and Local Buy Fresh/Buy Local Campaign**
Local Food Directory
 - A draft of the directory has been mailed to producers. The draft was sent along with a letter requesting contributions. We have received \$375 so far from producers for the BFBL directory.
 - Funding for \$1,000 was requested from each of the Community Foundations in Allamakee, Winneshiek, Fayette, Clayton, Howard counties and the Upper Mississippi Gaming. The group discussed options if we do not receive all the funding that we need.

Women Outreaching Women Grant Proposal Update – Teresa

4. Financial Committee Update:

- \$2000 from the Regional County Farm Bureau Boards from their “Wellness” dollars to assist with the coordination of the Food & Fitness Team Meetings in five county region
- \$1,000 was requested from each of the Community Foundations in Allamakee, Winneshiek, Fayette, Clayton, Howard counties and the Upper Mississippi Gaming for the local food directory.
- \$15,000 – Grant request for Women Outreaching Women grant request for a conference.
- \$15,000 from Leopold Center to NE IA RC&D. They are bringing together three other RC&D's in Iowa, producers, producer groups and buyers to develop a web-based, template that is designed to be the primary program for internet local food retail. The template will be designed for producers, producer groups and farmer networks that want to market to local clients, including individuals, institutions and large bulk buyers.

5. Update on W.K. Kellogg Foundation Food & Fitness Initiative

Beginning in January, ISU Extension's Brenda Ranum, Ann Mansfield, RN and Facilitator for Luther College and Winneshiek County Medical Center began facilitating a series of 3-4 strategic planning meetings in the 5 county region (Winneshiek, Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette and Howard). The expenses (travel, paper, postage, printing, food, etc.) are being subsidized by funding from the local and state Farm Bureau offices. Each county has nominated between 15-40 community members to serve on a Food & Fitness County Planning Team. These individuals have been contacted to participate in the strategic planning meetings to identify assets and barriers related to the procurement and consumption of healthy local foods, as well as access to physical environments and build structures for physical activity and play. These meetings are being coordinated with the help of the five county ISU Extension Offices, with assistance from Economic Development and Public Health. These meetings will be held between January 2007 and May 2007.

A video to set the background for the reason why the Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative is so important to Northeast Iowa was developed using brief presentations from the following four people: Jane Schadle, Iowa Dept. of Public Health; Craig Chase, ISU Extension Farm Management Specialist; Haleshia Johnson, Clayton County Hospital Foundation Director; and Dr. Brian Dougan, Winneshiek County Medical Center. This 35 minute video has been shown at all the County Food & Fitness Planning Team Meetings and has been well received.

Next Meetings: Tuesday, May 15, 2007, 7:30 pm, Dairy Center, Calmar
Thursday, June 7, 2007, Noon – 2:00 pm

Submitted: Teresa Wiemerslage