

Northeast Iowa Food & Farm Coalition
Agenda for May 8, 2008

The NE IA Food & Farm Coalition met on May 8, 2008 at noon at the Winneshiek County Extension office. Brenda Ranum called the meeting to order at 12:05 pm. Present: Teresa Wiemerslage, Brenda Ranum, Craig Chase, Eric Nordschow, Charlie Baier, Mary Steen, Kristine Jepsen.

The April minutes were reviewed and approved.

The Financial report was reviewed.

- Discussed Howard county grants. They will have a report ready by next NIFF meeting on June 7.
- Kristine is willing to help with the producer updates and stories. NIFF should send note out to producers about photos that someone will be contacting them.
- NIFF would pay for scholarships for local producers who would like to attend. \$29 each. \$20 scholarships available to people from 5 counties. Extension /NIFF can have a display at the event. Teresa and Dan B will be present to help.
- Update on Americorp volunteer. This option is not going to work this year. Arion might be someone to tap into when he is here this summer.

Old Business:

- Approve the additional recommendations for the NIFF Producer grants from Allamakee County. The members approved the grant requests.
- Teresa gave an update on BFBL local food directory. The store letters need to go out. Karla prepared a list for us to use. The directory will be ready by June 30.
- We need photos of farms and producers. We are looking for suggestions for people to take photos of farms for marketing purposes. A Photo contest was suggested as a way to collect photos.
- Report on Luther College event on April 17—Met John Terenne from Yale. He talked about how institutions can buy healthy food and talked about eating seasonally. Successful practice includes tying producers, farmers and chefs together at a community event.
- Report on Value Chain workshop on April 3. The concept of the meeting might be something to replicate in our area as things progress.
- Report on Kellogg Food & Society meeting April 30 – attended by Dan Burkhart and Brenda Ranum. WKKF is changing their focus to equity and social justice. Want to see 10% of food in US grown locally. It is currently 1%.
- Report on National Women in Ag Educators Conference May 1. Attended by Teresa. Lots of resources on estate planning, farm succession and business planning, mentoring programs for all farmers including women and minorities.

New Business:

- Community gardens are planned for Waukon, Postville, Decorah, Volga, Harpers Ferry, Cresco is discussing.
- Members talked about ways to spend the remainder of the RFSWG funds by 8/31/08). Discussed having a series of farm tours in August and September geared toward producers to learn more about different farming practices. Funds would go toward a stipend for the farm and for food.

- Presentation on Economic Impact study. Paper and summary are posted to webpage. Decided to wait until next time.
- Summary Report of the NIFF Producer meetings (final). Presentation next time.

Upcoming Events

May 8: NE Food & Farm Coalition meeting, noon-1:30 pm, Winneshiek Co Extension.

May 8: Clayton County Planning Team, Central State Bank, Elkader, 6-8 pm.

May 14: School Wellness Networking Meeting, 4-7 pm, location TBD. School wellness representatives from your school (2 adults & 1 youth) The purpose of this workshop is to convene a meeting for school representatives in our region to provide an opportunity to share best practices for school wellness activities/initiatives as well as inform the NE Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative re key ideas for improving the food and fitness environments in our schools.

May 15: Fayette County Planning Team, 4-6 pm, Fayette County Extension office.

May 21: Allamakee County Planning Team, 4:15-6 pm, Dining Center at Waukon Wellness Center.

May 21: Howard County Planning Team, Cresco Hospital, 6-8 pm.

May 21: Winneshiek County Planning Team, 4:30-6:30 pm, Decorah City Hall Meeting Room.

May 28: FFI Regional Team meeting, 11 am-2 pm, SeedSavers, Decorah.

June 5: NE Food & Farm Coalition meeting, noon-1:30 pm, Winneshiek County Extension.

June 3-4: The Power of Small: Building Solutions for Energy Self-Reliance

There are many self-reliant approaches to small-scale food, fuel, and power systems for schools and local governments. Come to this event to learn about the social, economic, environmental, and political factors that surround the building of these systems. The focus for this event is providing solutions for colleges/universities, P-12 schools, and local governments. Networking, mentoring, and educational opportunities will be provided. Keynote address by Peter Hutchinson, Bush Foundation Sixth Annual Symposium on Small Towns June 3 & 4, 2008. For much more info on the conference, visit <http://www.morris.umn.edu/services/cst/index.php>

June 11, Helping Small Iowa Meat Processors Expand, Upgrade or Build New Facilities, Cedar Falls

Hawkeye Tech Center, Cedar Falls. A shortage in small-scale meat processing capacity is a common problem cited by Iowa livestock producers. Operating under the name of the Small Meat Processors Working Group (SMPWG), the group has produced a Resource Guidebook which explains the resources available at the local, state and national levels to assist small Iowa meat processors who seek to begin, upgrade, or expand their businesses. Copies of this guidebook can be downloaded for free from the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development: www.ncrcrd.iastate.edu/pubs/contents/189.htm The SMPWG is also supporting this costing analysis workshop for small meat processors. For more information about the SMPWG or the costing workshops, contact Arion Thiboumery, (515) 294-2882

arion@iastate.edu or visit the website:

<http://www.ncrcrd.iastate.edu/projects/meatprocessors/index.html>

July 2: Midwest Dairy School or On-Farm Processing

9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at The Dairy Center located on Highway 150 south of Northeast Iowa Community College campus at Calmar, Iowa. The School will give an overview of On Farm processing with its strengths and weaknesses. The topics include: developing a successful business plan, state regulations and licensing, proper equipment, how to reach out to the community and branding, marketing and advertising your product.

The speakers include: Sue Stence, IDALS Pasteurization and equipment expert, Kevin Stiles, Midwest Dairy Association, Madeline Schultz with ISU Value-Added Ag Program, Jay Hansen with Hansen's Farm Fresh Dairy.

We have a panel of producers, moderated by Dave Lawstuen, NICC Dairy Science Chair, who have added on farm processing to their business: Bob Kappers, Chatfield, MN, Jay Hansen, Hudson, IA and Pam Benike, Elgin, MN. There will be a cheese making demonstration with Pam Benike, Coordinator for the SE MN Food Network. Ted Thuli, VP of Darlington Dairy Supply with Cheese on Wheels, a 53' trailer with a self contained production facility designed to provide an economical means to produce various dairy products, will talk and demonstrate the possibilities. He will be bringing the trailer if it is available.