

## Northeast Iowa Food & Farm Coalition

The NE IA Food & Farm Coalition met on October 3, 2008 at noon at the Winneshiek County Extension office. Present: Ann Bushman, Amanda Blagsvedt, Francis Martin, Lyle Luzum, Johnice Cross, Jacque Hahn, Karla Organist, Brianne Sparrgrove, Joyce Iverson, Mary Steen, Eric Nordschow, Teresa Wiemerslage, Craig Chase, Brenda Ranum, Stacy Bryant, Martin, Carolyn Corbin, Chris Askelson.

Eric moved to approve minutes from September 11 meeting. Mary seconded. Motion carried.

Members reviewed the Financial Report. Two grants are now completed. Remaining grants include:

- \$10,000 from RFSWG
- \$2000 from Community Vitality Center
- \$4000 from NE IA Business Network to design a local food website
  - Using local food – include recipes
  - Include sponsorships to sustain – refer to AGDM page.

Lyle moved to approve the financial report. Karla seconded. Motion carried.

### Old Business

- Farm to School Pre-Proposal, “Developing and Implementing a Strategic Plan for Farm-to-School Programs in NE Iowa” \$18,000 (Year 1) and \$12,000 (Year 2), has been approved for submission of a full proposal due Monday, Nov. 10, 2008. Carolyn Corbin has been approved by the NE Iowa FFI to spend time working on this grant on our behalf.
  - It was mentioned that the new Farm Bill has a pot of money for school nutrition programs. Big change from the past.
- View NE Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative powerpoint presentation for Key Audiences and discuss NIFF’s connection
  - Reactions: *Well done. Made sense*
  - What were the messages: *Healthy, active. Local food is healthier food. This is important to our region. All communities are affected. We need to provide safe food. Do we need to emphasize more of the role of processing, dist, etc for economic impact. Number of jobs, amount of money spent on food—what do the percentages mean?*
  - In the coming months, who are the Key Audiences for the NIFF Coalition that we will want to take this presentation to in our 5 county region and at the State level? This is still the planning message.
    - Master Gardeners
    - Lenders: only Winneshiek meet as a group; all types are needed commercial. County Economic Development could help. Lenders like to meet at events with potential customers.
    - Chambers (Chamber Association, Maura Jones, coordinator)
    - Economic Development Boards (ED Directors)
    - County Farm Bureau Boards
    - Institutional buyers
    - Restaurants (role as buyers and marketing partners)
    - Producers
    - 4-H groups and FFA chapters, Vo Ag instructors

- Food Distributors (H&H, etc)
- Eastern Iowa Tourism Association
- Need to have a Slow Food movement here
- Entrepreneurs (apple cider)
- 7 Rivers Regional Alliance, operates out of LaCrosse, attempts to bring people together to facilitate collaborations.
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- Are there any additional points or main messages we need to include in our presentation?
- Who will be the appropriate messengers for the Key Audiences that we've listed?
- Review and discuss the NE Iowa FFI Core Values, Vision, Strategies and Draft Tactics that relate to the work of the NIFF Coalition (See handout)
- Family Farmed Expo in Chicago, Nov 17-19 – Need to approve allocating funds to Glenda Plotzay and representatives from the PlantPeddler. (Leopold Center has Alces Funds in the amount of \$400 that we can allocate for local leaders to attend to see how real the demand is for local food, and it provides an opportunity for local leaders to meet with food businesses and other farmers.

#### **New Business**

- Steering Committee – Volunteers needed to begin discussing and sequencing draft activities to activate the Vision, Strategies and Draft Tactics for the work of NIFF
  - Work will begin immediately and progress through March.
  - The following people volunteered to help: Eric Nordschow, Teresa Wiemerslage, Amanda Blagsvedt, Lyle Luzum, Johnice Cross?
- Education Committee - Volunteers needed to plan producers/processor workshops, tours, field days for 2009 (\$1000 for speakers, \$1000 for food and rent); Planning done by Dec.
  - Work will begin immediately with goal to have programs planned by Dec. Programs in Jan-April.
  - Mary Steen, Dan Burkhart, Brianne Sparrgrove, Johnice Cross, Chris Askelson
  - Farm Bill implications for local food
  - Local Food Expo Networking meeting
  - Equipment Sharing
  - Labor Sharing
  - What is our capacity?
  - Seed buying pool
  - Post Harvest Handling
  - Food Safety

Meetings for both of these groups will be scheduled soon.

Items tabled until next month:

- Report of activities happening at the state level related to NIFF work:
  - Regional Food System's Working Group

- *Two New* local food groups added (Blackhawk County and Marshall County) now making 6 local food groups (NIFF Coalition, SE Iowa's Hometown Harvest, and SW Iowa's SWIFFI, NW Iowa)
- *Expanded* state-wide value-chain work groups to include: Grass-fed Beef, Fruits and Vegetables, Small Meat Processors, Niche Pork, etc.
- *New Iowa Micro-Loan Program*
- Iowa Foods Policy Council reforming in October 2008

**Report on Past Events:**

- Sunday, September 14 – Village Creek Farm, 3:00 pm (Allamakee): 18 people
- Sunday, September 21 – Tir na n'og, 3 pm (Clayton): 25 people
- RFSWG, Sept 22, Near Ames.
- Sunday, September 28 – Peake Orchards Farm Tour, 2:00-3:30 pm (Allamakee)

**Upcoming Events:**

- Ninth Annual Iowa Venture Capital and Entrepreneur Conference. Wednesday, October 15, 2008, Polk County Convention Complex, Des Moines, Iowa. Conference Registration: Registration information will be announced shortly and will be available at [www.iowalifechanging.com/register](http://www.iowalifechanging.com/register).
- County Food and Fitness Initiative Planning Teams will be reviewing the powerpoint presentation we viewed today at their October meetings.

**Next Meetings:**                    **Thursday, November 6, 2008, Noon – 1:30 pm**  
   **Thursday, December 4, 2008, Noon – 1:30 pm**