JUNE 15 - 17, 2023

COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEMS + FARM TO SCHOOL & EARLY CARE CONFERENCE

GROWING A CULTURE OF CELEBRATION

THURSDAY | COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEMS

Waukee Community School District
555 SE University Ave.
Waukee, IA 50263
bit.ly/cfs-f2ec-conference
THURSDAY | JUNE 15
COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEMS

7:00 AM  YOGA IN CENTENNIAL PARK (OPTIONAL)  MEET IN COMMONS

8:00 AM  REGISTRATION + BREAKFAST  COMMONS
9:15 AM  CONFERENCE WELCOME  AUDITORIUM
9:30 AM  MORNING PLENARY  AUDITORIUM
  PANEL ON FOOD SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT ACROSS IOWA
  LUKE ELZINGA, POLICY AND ADVOCACY MANAGER, DES MOINES AREA RELIGIOUS COUNCIL (FACILITATOR)
  AUBREY ALVAREZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EAT GREATER DES MOINES
  GISELLE BRUSKEWITZ, PROGRAM DIRECTOR, IOWA VALLEY RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT
  JAN LIBBEY, COORDINATOR, IOWA FOOD SYSTEM COALITION

10:30 AM  BREAK + EXHIBITORS
10:45 AM  MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS  SEE PAGE 3
11:30 AM  BREAK + EXHIBITORS
11:45 AM  LUNCH + EXHIBITORS  COMMONS
1:00 PM  AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS A  SEE PAGE 4
1:45 PM  BREAK + EXHIBITORS
2:00 PM  AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS B  SEE PAGE 5
2:45 PM  BREAK + EXHIBITORS + AFTERNOON SNACK
3:00 PM  AFTERNOON PLENARY  AUDITORIUM
  USDA INVESTMENTS & OPPORTUNITIES IN LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS
  LACY STEPHENS, AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SPECIALIST, USDA AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

4:00 PM  CLOSING REMARKS + ADJOURN  AUDITORIUM
  COURTNEY LONG, FOOD SYSTEMS PROGRAM MANAGER, IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION AND OUTREACH, FARM, FOOD AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

4:30 PM  NETWORKING AT GASTRO GRUB & PUB (OPTIONAL)

HAVE QUESTIONS THROUGHOUT THE CONFERENCE?
Stop by the registration table in the commons or look for someone with a staff or volunteer nametag.
Join Aubrey Alvarez, Executive Director of Eat Greater Des Moines, Giselle Bruskewitz, Program Director of Iowa Valley Resource Conservation & Development, and Jan Libbey, Coordinator of the Iowa Food System Coalition, in a panel discussion, facilitated by Luke Elzinga, on food systems development across Iowa. Multiple state-wide and regional grants have been awarded throughout Iowa to address gaps in food systems, including value-chain coordination, local food procurement, and planning. Panel participants will discuss the opportunities and challenges around current food systems efforts, as well as opportunities for engagement and resources for food systems development in your own communities.

Aubrey Alvarez is co-founder and Executive Director of Eat Greater Des Moines. Launched in April 2013, Eat Greater Des Moines is cultivating and redefining a food system for everyone so that good food is not wasted; our neighbors don’t go hungry; everyone has easy access to healthy, locally produced food; and food is produced and transported using sustainable, environmentally friendly practices. Through collective action, advocacy, and innovation, Eat Greater Des Moines is empowering people and organizations to change how food is grown, who can access it, and where and how you can get it. Aubrey is a graduate of the University of Northern Iowa (bachelor of arts in health promotion) and Drake University (masters in public administration). She is also a member of the board with Les Dames d’Escoffier of Greater Des Moines, Hunger Free Dallas County Coalition, Hunger Free Warren County, Regional Food System Working Group, Wallace Centers of Iowa, and Heritage Elementary PTO. She also serves on the Ankeny Human Rights Commission and was selected as a 2019 Health Connect Fellow. 2020 Les Dames d’Escoffier Women of Purpose nominee, and is a 2015 graduate of the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute. In her free time, Aubrey enjoys spending time with her husband and 2 young kids.

Giselle Bruskewitz is passionate about working in community to shape and strengthen our local food system in Iowa. As Program Director at Iowa Valley Resource Conservation and Development, Giselle works with partners across the state who lead value chain coordination, Food Hubs, Farm to School, local farmer viability, food access, advocacy and education. She serves as the Chair of the Johnson County Food Policy Council, sits on the Iowa Food System Coalition Steering Committee and the Farm to School and Early Care Coalition's Procurement, and Racial Equity Working Groups.

Jan Libbey serves as the Coordinator for the Iowa Food System Coalition that's been developing the Iowa Food System Plan. Jan comes to this work from more than 25 years in food system work as both a farmer and local food coordinator. She and her husband, Tim Landgraf, operated One Step at a Time Gardens (OSTG) 1996-2020 raising produce and poultry for direct market. She helped to found and served as Executive Director for Healthy Harvest of North Iowa, a nonprofit supporting local food system development, 2011 - 2019. She also assisted with management of North Iowa Fresh, LLC, a food hub that involved more than 12 farmers and served more than 200 families with their Bounty Box program as well as wholesale to grocers, restaurants, food bank, and schools, 2016-2020. Along with Tim, she has been recognized with the Spencer Award for Sustainable Agriculture and has been featured in several books related to her vision for the critical importance of community and food relationships.
THURSDAY | COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEMS

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

10:45 AM

INCREASING ACCESS TO LAND AND NUTRIENT-DENSE FOOD IN OUR COMMUNITY

10:45 AM | ROOM 405

KIT KIRBY, PROGRAM DIRECTOR, FEED IOWA FIRST | KIT@FEEDIOWA1ST.COM

Access to Iowa Agricultural land is hard to come by, especially if you are a small-scale vegetable farmer. At Feed Iowa First (FIF), we believe fresh and nutritious produce is not a luxury but a basic human right. Digging deep into the progression of FIF’s Equitable Land Access (ELA) Program and our process of connecting historically under-served populations of farmers to land on fair terms. We’ll discuss the importance of producing culturally relevant produce on a larger scale locally, how we are working to remove barriers to food and land access, and the impact it has had on the Linn County Community.

AN INTRODUCTION TO MARKETMAKER

10:45 AM | ROOM 406

JO PISEL, PARTNERSHIP SUCCESS MANAGEMENT, MARKETMAKER | JOKIRWILD@GMAIL.COM

This session will demonstrate the Buy/Sell Listings feature in MarketMaker. Listings allow buyers and sellers to post real-time availability of products and needs. This feature includes push notifications or “trade alerts” that are sent out to potential buyers and sellers. Discounts and Donations Depot is a unique feature of the Buy/Sell Listings that provides an online method for selling and buying seconds or surplus. The feature is available to any farm or food related business that would to either donate or offer a discount for flawed or excess product exclusively to food banks and charitable donations.

IMPERFECTO Y EFECTIVO: MULTILINGUAL SOLUTIONS IN COORDINATING CROSS-CULTURAL GARDEN ACTIVITIES

10:45 AM | ROOM 407

IMMIGRANT GARDENERS PANEL,
with LINDSEY MABE, COMMUNITY GARDEN AND COOKING CLASS COORDINATOR, 8TH & COLLEGE CONNECTIONS | LINDSEYGABE@GMAIL.COM

This presentation will describe creative ways we have bridged communication gaps in the coordination of a trilingual, multicultural community garden with the majority of gardeners being refugees, asylees, and immigrants. We have implemented verbal and nonverbal strategies in workshops, garden activities, and written communications to effectively increase connection and understanding when there isn't a "perfect" setup for it. Examples we will go over and/or show include utilizing visual aids and gestures; simplifying language and interpretation styles; offering hands-on options; and providing time for same-language individuals to process together. With openness, patience, and humor, these practices help to create a welcoming and inclusive environment.

GROWING A CULTURE OF CELEBRATION

What does celebration mean to you?
As we explore the theme of “Growing a Culture of Celebration” at the Iowa Community Food Systems + Farm to School & Early Care Conference, we invite you to join us in a breakout session focused on the dynamic work of Montgomery County Memorial Hospital + Clinics (MCMH+Clinics) in cultivating a culture of celebration in their own community to address food insecurity. Through dedicated partnerships with non-profit affiliate groups, MCMH + Clinics is working to promote access to healthy and nutritious food options through initiatives such as community gardens, mobile pantries, kids’ garden programs, and food pantry container garden classes. Our session will highlight the innovative approaches used by MCMH + Clinics to engage community members in the process of growing and celebrating local food systems. We will explore the successes and challenges of MCMH + Clinic’s initiatives and share concrete strategies for building sustainable and equitable partnerships between growing food systems and healthcare in your own communities. Do not miss this opportunity to learn from the dedicated staff at MCMH + Clinics and to join in the celebration of community-driven food systems.

In today’s world, data is abundant and readily available, but it can be overwhelming and difficult to make sense of it all. In this bite-sized session, we will provide a beginner’s guide to understanding and utilizing data in community food systems. We will explore the different sources of data, how to clean and store data, and how to manipulate data to extract meaningful insights. Additionally, we will discuss how to use quantitative data to tell a story and visualize the results. By the end of the session, attendees will have a basic understanding of how to use data to inform decision-making and advance their community food systems projects.

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The 2023 Iowa Food System Plan is hot off the press and ready for action! Join us for a lively introduction and focused discussion on the timeliness of the plan, how it was created, and what it can mean for Iowa. The session will provide background information and interactive discussion with other participants. We will spotlight the partnership between a local food business in Waterloo and the Northeast Food Bank that exemplify the essence of the Plan. Part II will be an interactive, working session where we will roll up our sleeves and dig into what it will mean to put the plan into action. We will emphasize the Iowa Food System Coalition’s role in providing continued convening for creative, reflecting, and planning throughout Plan implementation. Participants will walk away from this session with a greater awareness of the plan and clearer consideration of how it can align with your work.
THURSDAY | COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEMS
BREAKOUT SESSIONS

2:00 PM
USING VOLUNTEERS TO GROW PRODUCE TO DONATE  2:00 PM | ROOM 409

TRACY BLACKMER, DIRECTOR, IOWA GARDENING FOR GOOD | TRACY@IOWAGARDENINGFORGOOD.COM

This session will focus on an Iowa project that has focuses on using local volunteers to help grow food for people in need. Over 1.2 million pounds of fresh produce has been donated in Iowa with a plan to donate over 500,000 lbs. in 2023 and involve over 3,000 volunteers. Part of this projects focuses on teaching both youth and adults about serving others as well as how to grow the produce. All the elements needed to make such a project work including partners, funding, recruitment and distribution will be covered.

LUKE ELZINGA
Policy and Advocacy Manager
Des Moines Area Religious Council
lelzinga@dmarc.org

TARA KRAMER
Board Member
Des Moines Area Religious Council
801to515@gmail.com

This session will explore ways to use data and storytelling in advocating for systems-level changes. DMARC will present on its Storytellers Roundtable, which involves people with lived experience in advocacy, storytelling, and decision-making at the organization; and its data visualization dashboard, which is used as an advocacy and educational tool. DMARC will discuss its 2022 "Portrait of a Food Pantry Visitor: Data, Demographics, and Disparities" report, which highlights systemic root causes of hunger and food insecurity, including the legacy of racist policies such as redlining. The group will also present on the Iowa Hunger Coalition’s “SNAP Map” data tool, which has been used in advocating with legislators against harmful policies targeting SNAP and other public assistance programs.

CHELSEA KRIST
Farm to School and Early Care Program Coordinator
Iowa State University Extension and Outreach
Farm, Food and Enterprise Development
cekrist@iastate.edu

KRISTA SMITH
Farm to School and Early Care Education Coordinator
Iowa State University Extension and Outreach
Farm, Food and Enterprise Development
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The Iowa Farm to School and Early Care (F2SEC) Coalition brings together a dynamic group of partners engaged in food systems and education. This session will share a brief history of the Iowa Farm to School and Early Care Network and the unique scope of this group’s work. Learn about annual programs and funding opportunities including the USDA Local Food For Schools Grant, the Iowa Farm to Summer Campaign, Iowa Local Food Day, and Farm to Early Care Grants. The session will describe the staying power and essential partnerships in state local food incentive programs and highlight the importance of equity and inclusion frameworks in fostering new relationships. Attendees will learn how the statewide coalition's initiatives can support community-level programming and partnerships and will leave this session energized to organize locally!

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR YOUR FEEDBACK!
Please take a moment at the end of the conference to complete our evaluation.

bit.ly/23Evaluation
As an Agricultural Marketing Specialist with USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, Lacy Stephens, MS, MPH, RDN, works to improve market access for producers and develop new markets through research, convening, and technical assistance. Lacy has worked across the food system, from managing an organic vegetable farm to supporting state and federal policy efforts. In her previous role as Programs Director with the National Farm to School Network (NFSN), Lacy worked to expand the farm to school movement through information sharing, network building, and advocacy. Lacy has coordinated the NFSN Farm to Early Care Working Group and NFSN Equity in Farm to School Research Committee, is Past President of the Montana Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, and serves on the Board of Directors of the KC Farm School. Lacy is a registered dietitian with a Master’s Degree in Sustainable Food Systems and is a graduate of Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.
As we continue

Growing a Culture of Celebration

we would like to recognize the amazing work of the following organizations and individuals for their contributions to farm to school & early care and food systems.

THE GOLDEN ROOT AWARDS

are a celebration of Iowa schools, early care and education providers, and residential child care institutes working to grow and share their love of local food and community. For the first time, in the spring of 2023, partners with the Iowa Farm to School and Early Care Coalition hosted an application process for four award categories: K-12 School Building Award; Center-based Early Care Award; In-home Early Care Award; and Residential Child Care Institute Award. All 2023 Award Winners are listed below and will be recognized and celebrated during the Friday evening Local Foods Reception.

2023 OUTSTANDING AWARD WINNERS

2023 SMALL SCHOOL OF THE YEAR: ALBURNETT COMMUNITY SCHOOL

The Nutrition Department at Alburnett works in close partnership with the FFA program, integrates farm to school into classroom curriculum, and partners with area farmers to engage students in farm-to-school experiences. The district has a passion to not only feed children and students, but to feed them local, nutritious, delicious foods. They host “Taste-test Tuesdays,” featuring local foods, signage, and feedback from students.

2023 LARGE SCHOOL OF THE YEAR: SCHULER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

In the Waukee CSD, Shuler’s Farm to School program was created to provide students with real life, hands-on learning opportunities to discover where their food comes from. Staff believe that when students connect with these topics early on, they will be empowered to make healthy food choices. Schuler participates in the district’s “Harvest of the Month” program, even growing lettuce to feature in the school lunch program!

2023 IN-HOME PROVIDER OF THE YEAR: NORTH SIDE KIDS DAYCARE, EMMA ELDEEN

In-home child care provider Emma Elddeen loves all things botanical and brings this focus to her in-home child care program, North Side Kids Daycare in Iowa City. Her passion for farm to ECE connects her kids to all aspects of the thriving, on-site garden, giving students exposure to planting, harvesting, and tasting. Some of Emma’s child care families have started their own gardens and help maintain the kids’ on-site garden!

2023 EARLY CARE CENTER OF THE YEAR: TRI-COUNTY HEAD START

Tri-County has been expanding their farm to ECE program for years! They developed take-home farm to ECE resources for at-home gardening and family learning during COVID. With a strong commitment to local procurement, they have developed dependable partnerships with local producers. For hands-on learning and eating, they built indoor carts for year-round gardening and celebrations of local food!

GOLDEN ROOT AWARD WINNERS

GOLD AWARD WINNERS

- Schuler Elementary School, Waukee Community School District
- North Side Kids Daycare, In-Home Early Care Education
- Tri-County Head Start, Early Care Education Center

SILVER AWARD WINNERS

- Alburnett, K-12th grade
- Beckman Catholic High School
- Clear Lake High School
- Diagonal School, Pre K-12th grade
- Cynthia Rivera, In-Home Early Care Education Provider
- Hawkeye Area Community Action Program Head Start/Early Head Start (HACAP), Early Care Education Center

BRONZE AWARD WINNERS

- Lone Tree Community School, serving K-12th grades
- Michelle Tindell, In-Home Early Care Education Provider
The Iowa Food System Coalition is a community of more than 25 food system partners who have helped develop and continue to support the Iowa Food System Plan. The Coalition focuses on convening partner collaboration to advance the priorities identified in the food system plan, provides a monthly update newsletter, and supports cross cutting communication and policy development. Quarterly meetings provide space for updates combined with strategic and intersectional discussions about progress made, gaps identified, and appropriate next steps.

IOWAFOODSYSTEMCOALITION@GMAIL.COM

Agriculture is important to Iowa. We grow crops and raise livestock to feed our nation and beyond. Much of Iowa’s economy thrives on our rich agricultural heritage and ANR Extension and Outreach plays an important role in providing research-based information and resources to educate Iowa’s farmers, producers, and agribusinesses. Our programs impact all Iowans, whether they live in a rural or urban area, and have been developed to improve our quality of life.

EXTENSION.IASTATE.EDU/AG

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IOWAFOODSYSTEMCOALITION@GMAIL.COM

The Women, Food and Agriculture Network (WFAN) has a mission to engage women and non-binary people in building an ecological and just food and agricultural system through individual and community power. WFAN envisions a vibrant, community-centered food and agricultural system in which women are strong leaders. WFAN’s values are rooted in an ecological relationship with the land, interconnectedness, ecofeminism, justice and storytelling. For more information about WFAN and our 3-year strategic plan, please visit us at: wfan.org/about-wfan.

WFAN.ORG

FoodCorps partners with schools and communities to nourish kids’ health, education, and sense of belonging. Our AmeriCorps members serve alongside educators and school nutrition leaders to provide kids with nourishing meals, food education, and culturally affirming experiences with food that celebrate and nurture the whole child. Building on our service program, FoodCorps develops leaders, grows networks, and advocates for policy change in service of every kid’s health and wellbeing.

FOODCORPS.ORG

Thank you to our conference host:

Waukee Community School District!

We appreciate the collaboration and creativity from all of our partners and presenters that bring this conference to life. The Waukee Community School District supports and innovates farm to school and early care and local food initiatives in ways that have statewide impacts. It’s a treat to bring together this event and our community on site here! The following staff at Waukee Community School District were integral to envisioning this event and supporting the logistics to make it happen.

A huge thank you to:

KAITLYN SCHEUERMANN
District Farm to School Coordinator & Registered Dietitian Nutritionist

JEANIE ALLGOOD
Director of Nutrition Services
(and the rest of the district’s food service team keeping us nourished)

RYAN SANDER
Community Education Facility Coordinator
The planning committee would like to thank you for attending our conference and aiding us in growing a culture of celebration.

We appreciate you taking the time to join us this week and celebrate the amazing work each and every one of you do!

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR YOUR FEEDBACK!
Please take a moment at the end of the conference to complete our evaluation.

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