

Iowa Local Food and Farm Program

2018 Annual Report to the Iowa Legislature



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Cover photo (from left): Hawi Nyiera, Chi Pham, and April Yelich, 2017 summer workers at the Luther College garden in Decorah. They are holding the first cherry tomatoes of the season, grown in the garden's high tunnel. Sarah Forsythe photo.

Dear Friend,

We're pleased to share with you the 2018 report of the Local Food and Farm Program to the Iowa Legislature, covering its activities from July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2018.

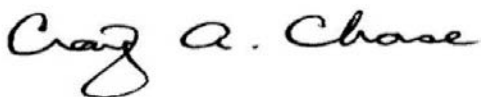
This program was established in August 2011 as part of the Iowa Local Food and Farm Initiative (SF-509). It was created to empower farmers and food entrepreneurs to provide for strong local food economies that promote self-sufficiency and job growth in the agricultural sector and allied sectors of the economy. The goals of this program are to:

- Promote the expansion of the production of local foods, including the production, processing, distribution, and marketing of Iowa products.
- Increase consumer and institutional spending on Iowa-produced and marketed foods.
- Increase the profitability of farmers and businesses engaged in enterprises related to producing, processing, distributing, and marketing local food.
- Increase the number of jobs in this state's farm and business economies associated with producing, processing, distributing, and marketing local food.

The program is a collaborative effort among the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, and ISU's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

We welcome inquiries and suggestions about our work. Contact me or other staff members using the information on pp. 17-18.

Sincerely,



Craig Chase, PhD
Coordinator, Iowa Local Food and Farm Plan





Local foods = more opportunities for Iowa's farms and rural economies.

Local and regional food systems: Driving rural economies

Consumer demand for local food is no longer a trend just for “foodies.” USDA research shows that sales of edible farm products nationwide has grown from \$404 million annually in 1992 to \$1.3 billion per year by 2012.

This 223 percent increase over 20 years far outpaces the rate of growth in the commodity ag sector. Another survey showed that a majority of consumers across the income spectrum are willing to pay a premium for local food.

Meanwhile, the farm to school movement is flourishing in Iowa, adding momentum to the sector's growth.

USDA figures show Iowa schools spent \$940,843 on locally grown foods during the 2017-18 school year, compared to \$659,802 the prior year.

The rising demand for locally grown foods can strengthen our rural economy. Local and regional food production tends to support new and beginning farmers, with lower entry and operating costs. It can also provide an alternative or diversified market for existing commodity farmers.

As an example, fresh fruit and vegetable growers retain 25 to 38 cents, respectively, for every dollar spent on their products. This compares with only 17.2 cents of each dollar retained by commodity market farmers.

Research also shows that farms selling direct-to-consumer have a higher survival rate than other farms – up to 10 percent higher in some cases.

Other studies suggest that local food production may create jobs and stimulate local economies at a higher rate than non-local production. USDA data suggest that farms selling locally tend to pay higher wages than conventional operations. That's good news for the businesses where those wage dollars will be spent.

Opportunities for Iowans

A 2017 USDA survey found that 4,068 Iowa farms sold local food in 2015 (through all marketing channels), with aggregate sales of more than \$194 million. This means about 5 percent of all Iowa farms are engaged in local food production.

Many farmers growing local foods are new or beginning; more than half (59 percent) of respondents in the 2015 Iowa Commercial Horticulture Survey for Food Crops have been growing fruits or vegetables for 10 years or fewer. Although some of them also have been growing commodity crops for longer.

The Iowa Legislature invested in this growing sector of the agricultural economy with its Local Food and Farm Initiative. Iowa State University Extension and Outreach's Local Foods Program carries out the provisions of this initiative with continued legislative support.

Local food production in Iowa provides:

- opportunities for beginning farmers to start farming with lower capital investment (smaller equipment and fewer acres are needed),

- opportunities for diversified farms that improve Iowa's food security and resilience,
- new markets for existing farmers, and
- opportunities for children and adults to connect to their food sources, and to develop healthy eating habits.

Investing in the future

All indications are that the local and regional foods sector of Iowa's economy will continue to grow, driven by consumer demand that has continued a steady rise for more than 20 years.

To support this growth, Iowa's local food producers, aggregators, and processors need:

- up to date, research-based production, management, and marketing information,
- facilitated networking and learning opportunities, and
- one-on-one technical assistance.

As you will see in this year's report, the Local Foods Program is uniquely positioned to provide continued leadership and support in each of these areas. Together, we can continue to grow Iowa's local foods economy into the future.



Boone Community School District wants to source more locally grown food. Staff toured Beaver Creek Produce, a nearby hydroponic greenhouse owned and operated by brothers Mike (second from right) and Tim Phelan. The brothers established it on their family's century farm in 2013, and also raise corn and soybeans, too. Emily Coll photo.

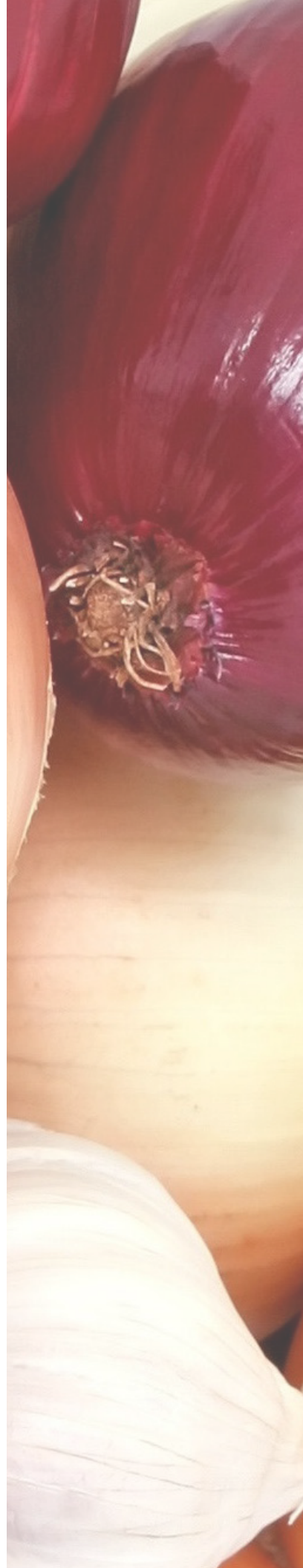
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Supporting Iowa's new and beginning farmers.

Many new farmers are interested in small-scale diversified agriculture because of its potentially higher returns per acre, and lower start-up costs.

In 2017–18, the Local Foods Program team supported increased local food production by providing technical assistance on a variety of projects, including:

Northeast Iowa Food and Farm Network. Originally the Northeast Iowa Beginning Farmer Network, this group of farmers changed their name to welcome more experienced mentor farmers. Their focus is on growing food for diversified markets, and they began meeting monthly in fall 2016 to learn best practices, share skills, and overcome challenges.

The ISU Local Foods Program team serve as facilitators for this group. We help organize gatherings at member farms each month.

True networking is occurring outside of the scheduled meetings as farmers are using an email listserv to share

information about workshops, conferences, and field days offered by other organizations. Group members use the listserv to arrange carpooling to events and conferences, schedule group workdays, ask for day-labor, and coordinate orders for supplies.

Looking ahead: We will continue to facilitate this group and partner with Practical Farmers of Iowa, which has received a three-year USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Grant to support creation of similar networks across the state.

Iowa Correctional Institution for Women, Mitchellville. Along with the ISU Landscape Architecture Program, we continue to work with inmates at ICIW to design and implement production gardens and an educational training program on their prison campus.

In summer and fall of 2017, more than 700 staff and offenders at the prison benefited from 7,000+ pounds of fresh produce grown and harvested for use in the facility's kitchen. The prison cafeteria saw an increase in consumption of salad



Beginning farmer Steffen Mirsky makes friends with a curious donkey during a NIFF tour of the Hawkeye Buffalo Ranch near Fredricksburg, fall 2017.

bar items this season as vegetables from the garden were added.

We also provided technical assistance to develop a prison production garden guide, continue to work with the facility to create a sustainability plan for the program, and support for industry job placement for women who participated in this program after their release.

Looking ahead: The scale of the program will continue to grow, with construction of a new high tunnel and greenhouse planned for fall 2018. We are also currently working with the women in the program to develop a multi-level production garden certificate program that they can pursue.



Green and yellow zucchini, harvested from the ICIW prison garden in 2017. Caitlin Szymanski photo.

Supporting expanded markets for locally grown farm products.

Iowa farmers are growing more healthy, delicious food, and more consumers want to buy it. Now what? While many farmers continue to market directly to consumers through farm stands and farmers markets, wholesale markets like grocery stores, restaurants, schools and institutions are clamoring for larger amounts of product. The Local Foods Program facilitates needed connections in various ways.

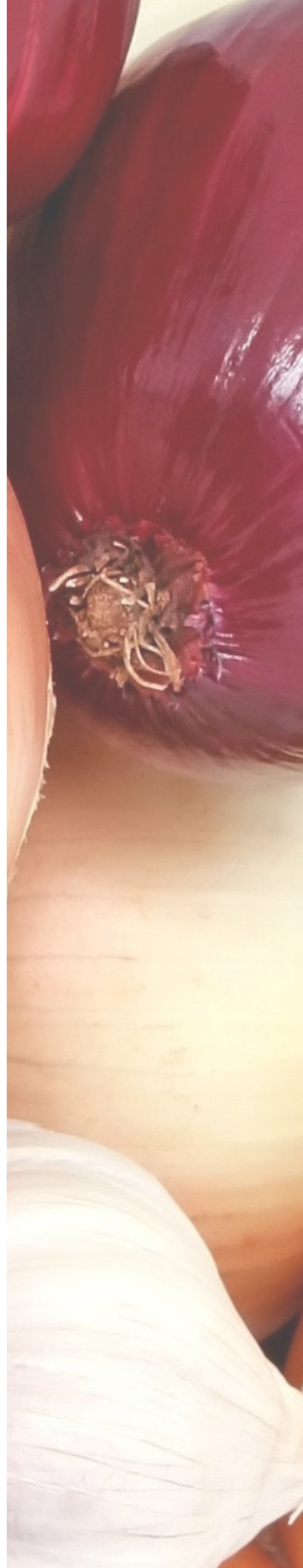
Food Hubs. According to USDA, a food hub is “a business or organization that actively manages the aggregation, distribution and marketing of source-identified food products, primarily from local and regional producers to strengthen their ability to satisfy wholesale, retail and institutional demand.”

The Local Food Program’s goals are to increase the following metrics for Iowa:

1. Total dollars of food hub and new market sales revenue.
2. Number of farmers’ accessing markets through food hubs and collaborative marketing opportunities.
3. Diversity of producers selling to food hubs and markets (including gender, age, and race).

During July 2017- June 2018, the ISU Local Foods Program:

- Co-facilitated the Iowa Food Hub Managers Working Group, a peer learning community for food hub managers. The team facilitated day-long meetings featuring food hub tours, presentations, and group discussions on shared challenges.





- Participated in a \$2,500 Iowa State University Innovation Grant in collaboration with Dubuque County Extension to develop new collaborations with farmers and buyers.
- Participated in a \$64,364 Farmers Market Promotion Program Grant with Lutheran Services of Iowa to conduct a feasibility study for the Global Greens Food Hub. The research project included business plan development, market research, site analysis for aggregation and land access, and feasibility of the future of the food hub.
- Iowa's food hub managers had the opportunity to attend a Food Hub Financial Management Boot Camp, presented by experts from the Food Finance Institute. Managers learned how to optimize their business model and see the different food hub business model paths that work in the existing food system. Six hub managers received additional help as they dug into their financial statements and learned about cash management, and sales and marketing strategies.
- Created a *Farmer and Buyer Toolkit for Wholesale Readiness* (available at www.extension.iastate.edu/localfoods/farmer-buyer-toolkit-for-wholesale-readiness).
- Developed a Food Hub Directory on our website to help Iowans find a food hub in their area, and see what types of products and services it offers.

Des Moines Public Market. In 2017-2018, the proposed site for a Des Moines public market switched to a new-build site in the East Village. This new site plan has been conducted in partnership with Christiansen Development, City of Des Moines Economic Development, Greater Des Moines Partnership, Iowa State University, and Brooks Borg Skiles Architecture Engineering, LLP.

Their vision is a space where food, art, and science converge.

The Des Moines Public Market concept offers an opportunity to capture the culture and vibrancy of Des Moines. A public market will instill new energy through commercial and residential space in the East Village. The proposed design will offer features of high-quality eateries, unique local businesses, modern classroom space, and shared working areas.



Left: Tera Johnson (right) of the Food Finance Institute works with James Nisly of Organic Greens, Washington, Iowa, to evaluate his food hub's financial statements.

Based on an economic impact assessment conducted by Iowa State University economist Dave Swenson, the project has an opportunity to provide (Table 1):

Table 1: Public Market Operations Economic Contributions				
	Jobs	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct	7.0	420,500	508,760	1,255,360
Indirect	7.5	254,056	400,170	735,333
Induced	4.2	180,546	316,895	531,603
TOTAL	18.7	\$ 855,101	\$ 1,225,825	\$ 2,522,297

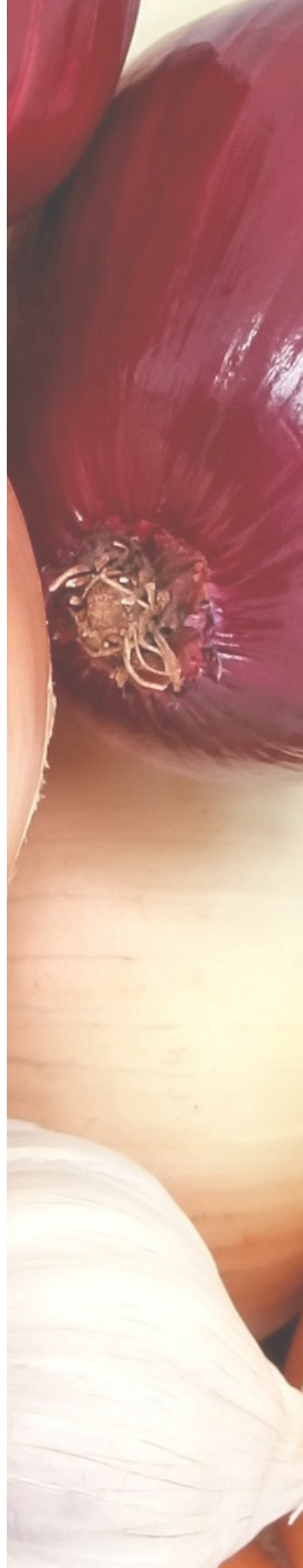
Shared Use and Value Added. Over the last year there has been an increase in interest for value added processing for specialty crops and meat. A new shared use and modular kitchen team has been developed at ISU to assist in research of appropriate modular kitchen design, business planning, and scaling-up opportunities with processing and shared use kitchen space.

Food Safety Training. We help Iowa farmers meet new federal regulations on food safety, as part of ISU’s Food Safety Team. In the past year:

- Iowa State University Extension and Outreach partnered with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship to assist with assessment of the needs of produce growers directly affected by the Food Safety Modernization Act’s (FSMA) Produce Rule, and to provide education and technical assistance to those affected by the rule. Iowa State’s five-year, \$1,118,900 grant is part of \$21.8 million that has been awarded by the US Food and Drug Administration for additional education on the new FSMA regulations.

- Iowa State University is the regional lead for the North Central Region, which consist of 12 states. Sixty-two grower trainings were held in the region in 2017, with more than 1,550 growers attending. When farmers were surveyed 12 months after attending a workshop, 73% had implemented or modified at least one food safety practice since attending training, and 31% of growers had added or modified farm infrastructure or equipment to improve food safety practices.

- The Iowa Group GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) Network helped 10 farms and 1 food hub become USDA GAP certified in 2017 — double the number of 2016. GroupGAP provides an affordable option for food safety certification for small and medium-sized producers.
- **What’s next?** The ISU Food Safety Team has scheduled 11 dates for day-long FSMA Produce Rule trainings for winter 2018–19. The ISU Food Safety Team will conduct 20 On-Farm Readiness Reviews (OFRR) for Iowa produce farms during 2018. The reviews will assess each farm’s readiness related to compliance with the new FDA regulations.



Supporting the farm to school movement in Iowa.

An increasing number of Iowa school districts are engaged in farm to school projects, from production (including school gardens and FFA projects) to purchasing locally grown food for their meal programs. The Local Foods Program team has been integral to this effort, including:

FoodCorps Iowa. Our program is the Iowa lead for FoodCorps, a national service program that connects kids to healthy food in school. During the 2017–18 school year, 11 FoodCorps Iowa service members and their supervisors worked directly with students in 7 Iowa communities, teaching Pick a Better Snack nutrition education, building infrastructure and support systems for school gardens, fostering partnerships between local

growers and food service staff, and leading systems change to support a schoolwide culture of health.

As the momentum and resources to support hands-on, wellness-based education grows across Iowa, FoodCorps continues to uphold a focus on community staying power and program sustainability. FoodCorps members serve as key resource contacts in their schools for the development of school wellness policies, professional development trainings for teachers and district staff, and community outreach to families and organizations.

Collectively, the FoodCorps Iowa team is developing and testing culturally responsive curriculum, connecting with 4-H youth and leaders to discover opportunities for local food education, and taste-testing local food recipes in schools to bolster markets for local producers. This work will continue into the next year of the FoodCorps term, which runs August 2018 through July 2019.

Looking ahead: FoodCorps National opened state offices in each partner state in program year 2018. A new state program coordinator has been hired, and he will continue to work collaboratively with the ISU Extension and Outreach Local Foods Program. In turn, FoodCorps Iowa will continue

Third-graders in Postville made quick refrigerator pickles last spring, using cucumbers, sweet peppers, and fresh herbs like dill, thyme, and rosemary.



to receive the benefit of excellent professional development and networking opportunities.

National Farm to School Network. In 2017, our team began providing oversight and leadership as the Iowa Core Partner for the National Farm to School Network.

We work closely with four partner organizations: the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, FoodCorps Iowa, the Iowa Department of Public Health, and the Iowa Association for Early Childhood Education. The goal of this team is to share information from the National Farm to School Network, and to support and track farm to school activities in the state. Several grants currently support this work.

In September of 2017, our farm to school team members began to facilitate

USDA national farm to school coordinator Andrea Northup (left), the 2018 Iowa Farm to School Conference keynote speaker, visits with National Farm to School Network Iowa coordinator Anna Mullen. Leigh Adcock photo.

the newly formed statewide Farm to School Network, which will be doing systems-level work including tracking procurement of local products in schools, networking to increase attendance and support for partner events and programs, and organization and management of an annual state farm to school conference.

The 2018 conference, held in Ankeny the last weekend in June, brought together 140 attendees for 9 workshops, a welcome by Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig, and a plenary by USDA



IOWA LOCAL FOOD DAY: OCT. 11, 2018

The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship has received a USDA Farm to School grant of \$100,000 to create a statewide celebration — Iowa Local Food Day.

This first-of-its-kind event will bring together all sectors of farm to school, with goals to: (1) provide a strong support network; (2) aid food service directors in making local procurements; (3) engage more growers in growing and selling produce to schools; (4) help growers ramp up school sales by working on a smaller scale with summer food service programs; (5) allow farm to school activities to expand beyond fruits and vegetables; and (6) raise public awareness of Iowa's farm to school efforts.



Iowa Local Food Day is set for October 11, 2018, during National Farm to School Month. Schools and districts can participate by serving two locally sourced foods that day, at breakfast or lunch. Learn more at www.iowalocalfoodday.org!



Iowa secretary of agriculture Mike Naig gave a welcome at the conference. Leigh Adcock photo.

farm to school representative Andrea Northup. Optional activities the next day included a local breakfast and a tour of three school gardens in Des Moines.

Our team sends a weekly Iowa farm to school newsletter to nearly 1,000 subscribers.

Looking ahead: The coalition will work to increase and diversify our network team, and to host town hall gatherings across the state to gain input from community leaders about their farm to school plans and needs. We'll use this input to improve our support for Iowa's farm to school movement.

ADDRESSING HUNGER IN IOWA

One in eight Iowans is food insecure, meaning they don't have regular access to adequate food for a healthy diet (Hunger in America national survey, 2014). Many depend on food pantries as a regular source of groceries, and according to a Feeding America survey, the number one thing they are missing on pantry shelves is fresh fruits and vegetables.

Iowa State University's SNAP Education Program and Master Gardener Program teamed up in 2016 to address this challenge through a project called "Growing Together: Healthy Food Access Project." Growing Together promotes healthy food access for families with low income through a partnership between ISU's SNAP-Ed program, Master Gardener volunteers, ISU Research Farms, and Iowa food pantries.

In 2017, 15 Master Gardener volunteer teams worked with food pantries in their communities to provide them with fresh produce throughout the growing season. The Growing Together project facilitated the donation of 74,937 pounds of produce to 75 food pantries and meal sites in 2017. 231 Master Gardener volunteers committed time to support healthy food access in their communities, and engaged with 457 partners to enhance their work.

Local Foods Program graduate assistant Carrie Chennault has worked with this project for the past two years, with a focus on access and equity issues. Her Donation Gardening Toolkit will appear on the team website in the fall of 2018. LFP program coordinator Caitlin Szymanski works closely with the project as well.



The Waverly Community Sharing Garden was supported by a Growing Together mini-grant. Carrie Chennault photo.

Supporting healthy communities.

Facilitating partnerships to strengthen communities has always been one of the things ISU Extension and Outreach does best. The Local Foods Program team fosters strategic growth in Iowa's local foods sector through:

Community Food Systems Program.

This flagship program, housed within the Agriculture and Natural Resources and the Community and Economic Development Departments of ISU Extension and Outreach, implements a multi-phased, multi-year approach to community planning around local food systems.

The program strategically partners with the Iowa State University Community Design Lab for design assistance throughout each three-year process.

CFSP's primary objective is to work closely with communities to develop, design, and implement local and regional food systems, by creating long-term community empowerment and lasting impacts.

The program was established in 2013, and has been deployed in 8 communities across the state, including implementation of more than 30 different projects and programs. Examples include edible landscapes, community garden workshops, food business strategies, public market feasibility studies and design, urban farms, food hubs, and branding and awareness campaigns.

The program has evolved to also include scopes of work, and projects have included food hub feasibility studies, shared use kitchen projects, and general design assistance.

In 2017-2018 partnerships in Iowa included Des Moines (public market), Cass County, Dubuque, Healthy Harvest of North Iowa, Pleasant Hill, and a collaboration with Lutheran Services of Iowa. During summer 2018, the program began to partner with the US Virgin Islands on projects related to disaster recovery and food systems resiliency.

The Community Food Systems Program has taken its unique brand of food systems planning to a national level. In the past year, we have offered training and certification in community food systems to audiences all across the US. Courtesy Long photo.





Local Food Leader and Community Food Systems Certification. In the fall of 2017, the program received an Agriculture Marketing Resource Center grant to launch two national certification programs: Local Food Leader and Community Food Systems.

The **Local Food Leader** certification is offered as a one-day workshop followed by four online modules. The certification provides foundational knowledge for working in food systems including equity, facilitation, work plan development, and evaluation.

The training was offered in Iowa, North Carolina and Texas in spring 2018, and will be offered in the Virgin Islands, Alaska, Nebraska, Colorado, and Pennsylvania in the fall of 2018. As of July 2018, more than 60 people were participating in the online modules for Local Food Leader. More than 90 had participated in the in-person workshop.

The **Community Food Systems** certification is offered as a two-day workshop followed by four online modules and observation. There are four levels offered for the certification: full, facilitator, assessor, and technical assistance. The certification trains individuals in the full process of the CFSP at Iowa State University.

This includes coalition development, public input sessions, community food systems assessment creation, design

thinking, project management, and evaluation. The certification was offered in North Carolina, Kentucky, Texas, and Georgia in the spring of 2018. We will offer it in the Virgin Islands, Alaska, Nebraska, Iowa, Colorado, and Pennsylvania in the fall of 2018.

Looking ahead: We will share the model nationwide through development of a new train-the-trainer program, to be launched in the winter of 2019.

Regional Food Systems Working Group (RFSWG). Established in 2003, RFSWG is a statewide network for Iowans working to build a more resilient regional food system. RFSWG is comprised of 15 geographically based groups covering 81 Iowa counties. Each group works with different stakeholders — farmers, food-based businesses, non-profits, extension staff, resource conservation and development groups, educational institutions, and government agencies — to support local food systems development in their region.

At the beginning of 2018, the group's steering committee formalized for organizing purposes, and created an executive committee to begin to take on and distribute the tasks of the organization.

We work with the group's steering committee to offer periodic webinars and quarterly networking and professional development meetings.

Looking ahead: The RFSWG steering committee will complete a strategic plan to help local food leaders across the state create coalitions to work on equity, partnership development, policy and professional development. This will be done collaboratively with communities employing the Community Food Systems Program (see above).



Measuring and sharing impacts and successes of local foods.

Measuring the impact of the local foods sector on Iowa's economy is a vital task of the Local Foods Program. Our evaluators contribute to the growing body of knowledge and data on local foods through:

Question Keeper. This year, we worked with the National Farm to School Network to add seminal surveys for evaluating farm to school efforts to the Question Keeper survey database we created in 2016. Following that, the NFSN promoted Question Keeper to their network members, which helped increase the number of registered users of the tool to 88.

Partnering with CFSP. We worked with the Community Food Systems Program to add an evaluation component to the one-day Local Food Leader training, as well as create an online module about evaluation. The one-day training and online modules are currently being pilot-tested around the nation (see p. 14).

Looking ahead: We are working with Ray Hansen of ISU Extension and Outreach to conduct a needs assessment with Iowa's 16 community colleges to identify opportunities for collaboration. We believe there is much opportunity to collaborate on high-quality educational programs, increase efficiency, and utilize one another's expertise.

We will use a process called concept mapping to brainstorm ideas for collaboration, synthesize ideas, and rank ideas by priority and feasibility. We anticipate the result of this project to be an action plan to pursue opportunities with the greatest potential for positive impact.

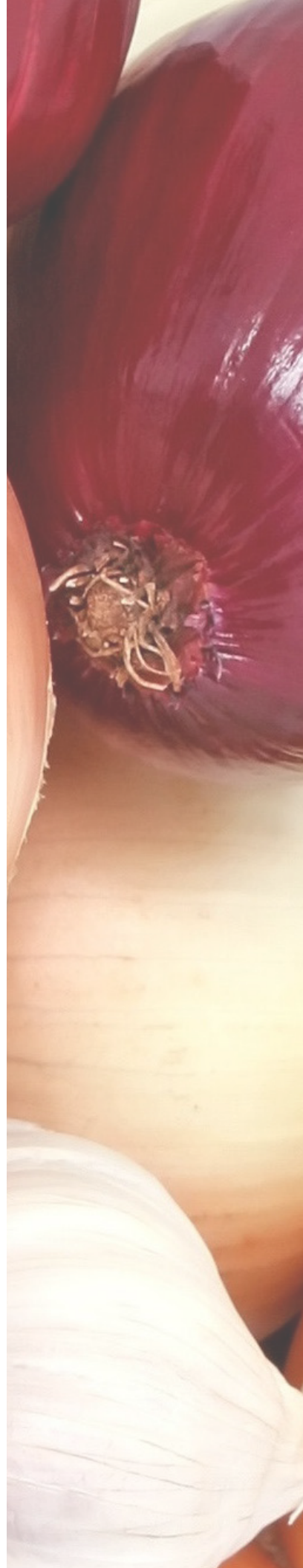
Sharing Successes, Updates, and Resources. A Local Foods Program website was launched in 2015 at www.extension.iastate.edu/localfoods. The site houses a wide variety of resources and toolkits for local food systems practitioners. It's also the place to learn all the important reasons why ISU Extension and Outreach invests in local food systems development.

The site offers a blog with weekly updates of interest to the Local Foods Program's clients, and an RSS feed for subscribers. The site garnered more than 30,000 page views in fiscal 2017. Our Facebook page currently has 600 followers, and posts updates daily.

Publications are continuously developed and made available through the ISU Extension Store and on the website, all at no cost to clients. Topics range from food hub financial management to community food system development to state regulations for poultry production, and much more.

In 2016, we began distributing a monthly e-newsletter highlighting projects, resources and events of interest to local foods practitioners across Iowa. The newsletter is sent to 650 individuals and media outlets statewide. (Sign up at <http://bit.ly/2wc2F1a>!)

Most student associations related to beginning farmers at Iowa State University focus on large-scale farming. The team's goal is to increase the awareness of ISU students of the benefits of local food agriculture enterprises. This will be done through strategic outreach as well as hiring





interns from different backgrounds to work with the Local Foods Program.

In 2015, we began sponsoring an annual ISU Local Food Festival in central campus, featuring farmers, student clubs, and other organizations supportive of local foods.

This event draws nearly 2,000 visitors to the booths lining the sidewalk between



Curtiss and Beardshear Halls. Nearly 40 vendors will participate in Sept. 2018.

We also respond to media requests for information and contacts related to local foods in Iowa, and speak to classes and student clubs on campus upon request.



Visitors and vendors at the ISU Local Foods Festival. Leigh Adcock photos.

Our most recent resources.

Farmer and Buyer Toolkit for Wholesale Readiness. This toolkit shares best practices for buying and selling local food products, for farmers and food procurers.

www.extension.iastate.edu/localfoods/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Farmer-Buyer-Toolkits-for-Wholesale-Readiness.pdf

Iowa Poultry Slaughter, Processing, and Sales Guidelines for Small-Scale Producers. This publication is designed to help small-scale poultry producers in Iowa figure out

poultry slaughter and processing regulations and their associated marketing requirements. <https://store.extension.iastate.edu/product/13044>



Iowa CSA Directory. A continuously updated web-based directory of community-supported agriculture (CSA) farms serving Iowa customers.

www.extension.iastate.edu/localfoods/iowa-csa-directory



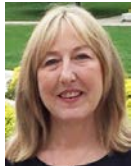
Iowa Food Hub Directory. A web-based directory of food hubs serving Iowa farmers and customers, including type of hub and products and services available.

www.extension.iastate.edu/localfoods/iowa-food-hub-directory

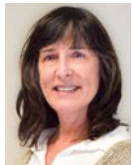
Meet our team.



Craig Chase — Local Food and Farm Initiative state coordinator. Craig also is director of the Local Foods and Value Added Agriculture Programs for ISU Extension and Outreach. cchase@iastate.edu



Lynn Heuss — Local Food and Farm Initiative assistant state coordinator. Lynn is a program coordinator for the Local Foods Program, with an emphasis on farm to school and partnership development work. leheuss@iastate.edu



Leigh Adcock — communications specialist. Leigh maintains the team's website, blog, and Facebook page, and co-writes, edits, and formats its newsletters, resource publications, and reports. laadcock@iastate.edu



Carrie Chennault — graduate research assistant. Carrie's research interests include the intersection of sustainable agriculture, food, and critical geography. She is pursuing a PhD in sustainable agriculture at ISU. carriemc@iastate.edu



Emily Coll — program assistant. Emily conducts economic research studies on edible horticultural crop production, and coordinates the Market Ready program of ISU's Value Added Agriculture program. ecoll@iastate.edu



Arlene Enderton — evaluator. Arlene leads in our program evaluation efforts by conducting interviews, creating surveys, analyzing data, and writing reports. arlene@iastate.edu



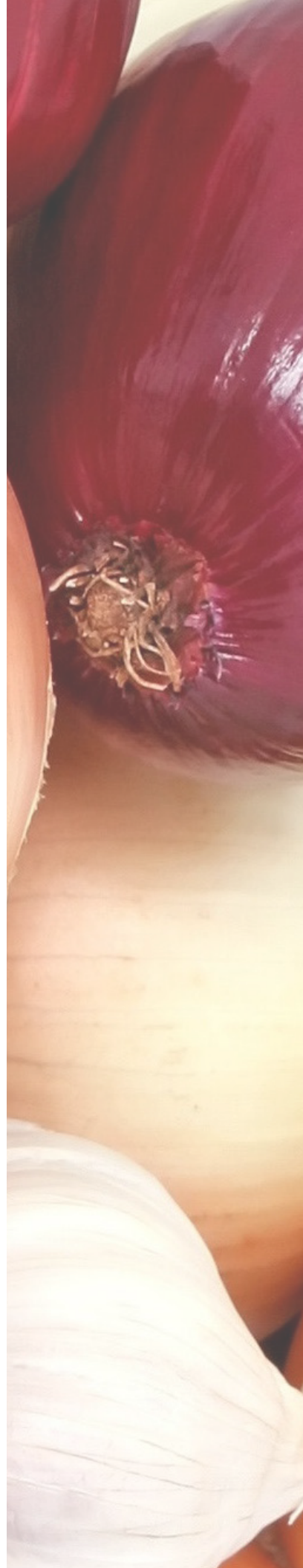
Kaley Hohenshell — program assistant. Kaley assists with project management, coalition and partnership development, and research for the Community Food Systems Program. kaleyh@iastate.edu



Kayla Koether — food systems specialist. Kayla is a food systems specialist for ISU Extension and Outreach in six counties in northeast Iowa. She specializes in beginning farmer education and outreach. koether@iastate.edu



Chelsea Krist — program coordinator. Chelsea is the team's farm to school coordinator, centering her work in equity, community collaboration, and evaluation for Iowa school districts' farm to school programs. cekrist@iastate.edu





Courtney Long — program coordinator. Courtney coordinates the Community Food Systems Program, assisting communities in coalition development, community food system assessments, and implementation of prioritized projects based on collective community goals. court7@iastate.edu



Emily Paull — administrative assistant. Emily is an administrative specialist for the Local Foods and Value Added Agriculture Programs. eltpaull@iastate.edu



Nathan Spalding — FoodCorps Iowa program coordinator. Nathan is responsible for leading, coaching, and supporting the cohort of 11 FoodCorps service members and FoodCorps programming in Iowa. nathan.spalding@foodcorps.org



Caitlin Szymanski — program coordinator. Caitlin's work focuses on supporting and connecting local food coordinators and other county-based extension employees around Iowa whose work intersects with the local food system. szy@iastate.edu



Teresa Wiemerslage – food systems field specialist. Teresa specializes in farm to school, farm to institution, food hubs, and on-farm food safety. She is an advisor for the Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative and the Iowa GroupGAP Network. wiemer@iastate.edu



Our program council.

A local food and farm program council was established by the LFFI's legislation to "advise the local food and farm program coordinator carrying out the purpose and goals of the [Initiative]." The council consists of six members representing different partners within Iowa's local food system.

The group has been meeting once or more per year since January 2012. Current members include:

- Maury Wills, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
- Aaron Lehman, Iowa Farmers Union
- Jason Grimm, Iowa League of RC&Ds of the Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Teresa Wiemerslage, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and the Northeast Iowa Food and Farm Coalition
- Barb Ristau, Iowa Farmers Market Association
- Marcy Billings, Loffredo Fresh Produce



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