

# Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness News - November 2012

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**"I saw that apple hanging there, and I knew I had to have it for my own!"**

Sometimes it takes a little cooperation to make the healthy choice! Postville after-school club kids visited Seed Savers and instantly fell in love with the Historic Apple Orchard.



## FFI Transitions to New Leadership Structure

FFI has an integrated and complex leadership structure with multiple components of community engagement through team meetings and work group sessions. For the first five years of the work, this structure has served them well because it facilitated widespread ownership, awareness of the initiative, and momentum across six counties.

Now, FFI is transitioning to governance by a Regional Leadership Council that will provide oversight for the Initiative on a quarterly basis. An Operations Team will meet more frequently to manage the daily activities between work groups.

The Regional Leadership Council reflects the broader make-up of the region, including members who give voice to the

thinking of traditionally marginalized groups and youth. Consideration is also given to members who can bring access to resources for sustainability.

The first meeting for the new Regional Leadership Council is set for November 27.

*As we reflect on this season of Thanksgiving, we are thankful for our partners and friends. We couldn't do this work without you!*

## FFI Expected to Receive Extended Funding

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation is continuing its investment in the Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative (FFI). With the continued support, the initiative now moves from the implementation phase to an extended funding phase with a focus on long-term sustainability.

Collaboration has been a trademark of the FFI for the last five years. Six rural counties--Allamakee, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Howard, and Winneshiek-- have worked together to improve the health and well-being of children and their families in the region.

Their work has been grounded in the principle that they can do more by **working together**.

The growth has been accompanied by tremendous change and numerous accomplishments, which speak to the strength of this collaborative endeavor.

FFI staff work diligently to keep long-term partners engaged in the work, bring new partners to the table and sustain efforts to create vibrant communities where the healthy choice is the easy choice.

## FFI Recognized at 2012 Nourish Iowa Awards

On October 12, the Iowa Food Systems Council (IFSC) recognized FFI at the 2012 Nourish Iowa award ceremony.

The Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative is grounded in the work of these core partners:



Scanning the Headlines... Visit [www.iowafoodandfitness.org](http://www.iowafoodandfitness.org) for more details.

## LOCAL FOOD NEWS

### Bus Trip Planned to Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable Expo

The Great Lakes Expo is the premier tradeshow for fruit and vegetable growers, farmer marketers and greenhouse operators. Windridge Implements, along with FFI are sponsoring a chartered bus trip to the Great Lakes Expo on December 3-5.

### Seeking Local Food Projects

The Local Food and Farm Program is looking for a few good ideas that will help put more Iowa-grown products on dinner plates and more money in the pockets of Iowa farmers. Due No. 29.

### Report Examines Veg Production

Practical Farmers of Iowa has published a new report that explores the challenges and opportunities to increasing wholesale fruit and vegetable sales in Iowa, and outlines strategies for overcoming these barriers. The report – “Scaling Up: Perspectives from Growers and Buyers on Barriers and Benefits to Wholesale Marketing of Fruits and Vegetables” – is available on PFI’s website at [www.practicalfarmers.org](http://www.practicalfarmers.org).

### Food Safety Grant for Farmers

Winneshiek County Extension received a grant from the Iowa Department of Agriculture to provide cost-share funding for vegetable farmers to assist them with the costs associated with a Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) audit.

### Worksite Foodbox Pilot Program

Two NE Iowa employers are hosting a worksite foodbox program featuring local foods for their employees. Over 30 employees at Rockwell Collins and the ISU Extension office in Decorah receive a grocery bag full of local food items each week.

### ISUEO Annual Conference Honor

FFI was awarded the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Team Achievement Award at the 2012 Extension and Outreach Annual Conference in Ames on Oct. 25.

## ACTIVE LIVING NEWS

### Employment Transportation Survey

Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission is part of a local team of NE Iowa economic development, transportation, and employment specialists is conducting a survey to get a better understanding of current employment transportation options and needs.

### Report Examines Economic Value of Outdoor Recreation Amenities

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Community and Economic Development recently published a report on the value of Iowa’s outdoor recreation amenities.

### Decorah named a "Blue Zone"

Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield and Healthways announced that Decorah has been named a Blue Zones Project demonstration site.

## YOUTH NEWS

### Regional Youth Gather for FEEST

Over 65 4-H youth wellness champions and their adult coaches from fifteen area school districts recently attended the first of four Food & Fitness Regional Youth Leadership Team Meetings. It was a day jam-packed with activities centered on school food.

### Grants For FFI 4-H Youth Teams

The Northeast Iowa Food and Farm Coalition is pleased to offer mini-grants to FFI 4-H Youth Teams in Allamakee, Clayton, Chickasaw, Fayette, Howard or Winneshiek counties. FFI 4-H Youth Teams interested in starting or expanding the Food Empowerment Education Sustainability Team (FEEST), in northeast Iowa are eligible to apply.



## SCHOOL NEWS

Check of the FFI Blog for the rest of the story!



[www.iowafoodandfitness.org/wegrow](http://www.iowafoodandfitness.org/wegrow)

- There was a **Squash Election** at N. Winn
- 16 schools participated in **Home Grown School Lunch Week**, October 15-19
- Read how Postville students said “**Goodnight**” to their school garden for the year.
- New Hampton students learned how to **mix it up** with kale.
- West Central students learned how much better they feel when the school wellness groups are **turned on**.
- S. Winn high school students came to the rescue when their school was **locked down** and their food service staff were **locked out!**
- Clayton Ridge food service staff went all out for Home Grown School Lunch week and served **local food all week!**
- MFL Mar Mac students fell in love with **cabbage**.
- Kids say the darndest things. But in all fairness, sometimes the terms we use are confusing. Read how one Valley students initially thought “**sustainability**” was the ability to stain things; and how one Turkey Valley student wondered why RC Melanie’s shirt said, “Food Crops.”
- UNI’s CEEE partners with FFI to serve area schools. Seven school districts are piloting a **regional, cycle menu** that includes local foods: Decorah, Postville, Turkey Valley, South Winneshiek, Waukon and Cresco and Starmont.