

Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative Cross-Site Evaluation Summary of Outcomes and Impacts, 2015-16 (Year 7)

Arlene Enderton, November 2016

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The Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative (FFI) works in six rural counties in Northeast Iowa (Allamakee, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Howard, and Winneshiek) to improve the health and well-being of children and families in the region. Countless individuals and organizations work together to increase access to healthy, local foods and opportunities for play through four strategies—K-12 Schools, Early Childhood, Local Food, and Safe Routes to School—while engaging youth to participate in all strategies. FFI serves as an Iowa leader in changing policies, systems and environments to make healthy choices easier and more available. This report shares the highlights of FFI's outcomes and impacts in 2016.

Impact on Equity

FFI's mission is to increase access to healthy, locally grown foods and abundant opportunities for physical activity and play for children, especially those in the most vulnerable groups. Year 7 impacts on equity include:

- **FFI reached 86 percent (1,283) of non-white, pre-K-12 students** in Northeast Iowa through its work in schools.
- FFI's Farm to Preschool program reached an estimated 1,200 preschool students. Three hundred twenty-seven or **more than one-fourth of these were Head Start or Early Head Start students, all of whom are from low-income families.**

Food System Change in Northeast Iowa

Besides job growth, the Initiative tracks change in local foods commerce.

- School purchases of local food remained high in 2015-16, with 14 schools spending a total of \$63,438.
- Local food sales reported by farmers increased 16 percent from \$2.2 million in 2014 to \$2.58 million in 2015.
- A new 4-H greenhouse club was formed near West Union when a local farmer offered his greenhouse to use as an educational farm.
- The Iowa Food Hub (IFH), a non-profit food hub that emerged out of the NIFF Coalition and the FFI, continues to aggregate and distribute foods produced in Northeast Iowa, lessening the effects of poverty.

Accomplishments in 2016 include:

- In 2015, IFH purchased \$508,439 in goods from local farmers and reached the milestone of purchasing a total of \$1 million from farmers since its start.
- As of July 2016, a total of 67 farmers or farmers' groups were selling products to the IFH.
- The IFH staff started a new "node" in the Dubuque area in 2016. They are working with local partners to identify key local food producers and buyers to develop buying and selling relationships. They also converted a 10-foot trailer to a "cool-bot" trailer to serve as a temporary cold storage facility located at Sinsinawa Mound Center.

Job Creation and Other Economic Opportunities

The Initiative has tracked job creation, retention, and expansion related to food and fitness work for seven years. Table 1 shows the cumulative results during that time. Listed are the number of jobs and **full-time equivalent (FTE)** jobs created at the farm level, as well as those created within partnering institutions and for the Initiative. We also tracked other kinds of economic opportunities that do not qualify as FTE jobs, but reflect positive economic change in the region.

Table 1: New or Expanded Economic Development Opportunities Associated with NE Iowa Food and Fitness, 2009-2015

Economic Opportunity	Year 1 (2009)	Year 2 (2010)	Year 3 (2011)	Year 4 (2012)	Year 5 (2013)	Year 6 (2014)	Year 7 (2015)	Total FTE Jobs	Total Jobs
New Job Creation									
Number of new farm-level and value-added jobs ¹	2	17	8	10	20 ⁹	14	4	NA	75
Estimated number of new FTE ² farm-level and value-added jobs	2	11.5	6	6	12	8.5	3.5	49.5	NA
Number of new institutional/intermediated market buyer jobs ³	0	0	4	3	6	9	3	NA	25
Number of estimated new FTE ² institutional market buyer jobs	0	0	3	2.5	3	7	2.5	18	NA
FFI Jobs	6	5	0	1	0	0	0	NA	12
FFI Jobs (FTE) ⁴	2.5	2.5	0	0.7	0	0	0	5.7	NA
New AmeriCorps and FoodCorps service positions ⁵	2	2	1	1	0	2	2	10	10
TOTAL new job creation (excludes jobs lost)	10	24	13	15	26	25	9	NA	122
TOTAL new FTE ² job creation	6.5	16	10	10.2	15	17.5	8	83.2	NA
Number of new local food producers/food enterprises⁶	8	12	14	14	15	3	10	NA	76
Number of expanded jobs⁷	0	0.5	2.5	6	3	4	0	NA	16
TOTAL NUMBER of new or expanded economic opportunities⁸	18	36.5	29.5	35	44	32	16	NA	214

¹This category includes position-related jobs as well as jobs associated with on- or off-farm processing, distribution and marketing.

²FTE jobs were calculated whereby 1 permanent FT job=1, while 1 permanent PT, seasonal FT, or seasonal PT job=.5.

³This category of jobs includes those created within institutions and intermediated markets buying locally grown food (including local foods buyers/purchasing specialists, food prep jobs, and nutrition outreach coordination).

⁴FFI jobs were created using WKKF dollars and leveraged dollars to pay for staff to support FFI efforts.

⁵FFI writes a new application to employ service members each year. The number awarded varies from year to year. Figures in the table represent the number of NEW service member positions awarded FFI each year.

⁶Numbers in this category are not included in the category on New Job Creation because they may or may not be full-time jobs. Most new local food producers also have off-farm jobs or may be adding local food production to an existing farm. A whole new job is not necessarily created, but the new local food enterprise does offer new economic opportunities.

⁷These are jobs that already existed but were expanded to include additional paid time spent on local foods or FFI work.

⁸Total number of new or expanded economic opportunities was calculated by adding Total new job creation, Number of new local food producers/ food enterprises, and Number of expanded jobs.

⁹This number was updated from what was reported last year because additional data were shared by farmers.

Leveraged Funding

In Year 7, the Initiative leveraged more than \$840,000 in direct leverage, shown in Table 2. For every dollar invested by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation through its Food and Community program since 2007, the Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative has leveraged an additional \$1.97. Over the past seven years, 37 percent was leveraged from national/federal sources, 40 percent was leveraged from state sources, and 23 percent was leveraged from local sources within Northeast Iowa. The majority of total FFI-related funding came from the

public sector (67 percent), 19 percent from the civic sector, 3 percent from the private sector, and 11 percent from multi-sector collaborative funding. These analyses do not include WKKF Food and Community funding (although they do include two grants received in 2016 from WKKF’s competitive grant program).

Table 2: Leverage of the Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative, 2008-2013

	WK Kellogg Foundation funding	Direct Leverage by NEIF&F	Aligned Leverage by NEIF&F	Total Leverage by NEIF&F	Total FFI Related Investment
Planning Phase (2007-2009)	\$650,000	\$0	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$1,050,000
Year 1 Community Action Plan (2009-2010)	\$400,000	\$237,093	\$656,059	\$893,152	\$1,293,152
Year 2 Community Action Plan (2010-2011)	\$400,000	\$278,202	\$86,214	\$364,416	\$764,416
Year 3 Community Action Plan (2011-2012)	\$400,000	\$480,569	\$228,503	\$709,072	\$1,109,072
Year 4 Community Action Plan (2012-2013)	\$300,000	\$497,524	\$136,957	\$634,480	\$934,480
Year 5 Community Action Plan (2013-14)	\$200,000	\$472,007	\$113,611	\$585,618	\$785,618
Year 6 Community Action Plan (2014-15)	\$200,000	\$452,397	\$325,403	\$777,800	\$977,800
Year 7 Community Action Plan (2015-16)	\$200,000	\$840,639	\$218,295	\$1,058,934	\$1,258,934
GRAND TOTALS	\$2,750,000	\$3,258,430	\$2,165,042	\$5,423,471	\$8,173,471

Community partners are investing financially to sustain FFI:

- Since 2009, more than \$1 million in *local* public, private, and civic funding have been invested in FFI and allied efforts in Northeast Iowa that also are working to increase access to healthy local foods and opportunities for active living.
- Seven schools committed to financially supporting an FFI Resource Contact in 2016-17 with a total of \$42,000 invested. This demonstrates their commitment to FFI and the value they place on having a daily FFI presence in their schools.

School and Early Childhood Change

Healthy living habits are best formed in childhood. Therefore, FFI works extensively with schools and early childhood providers to impact children. In the past year,

- FFI’s Farm to Early Education program is spreading statewide while expanding in Northeast Iowa:
 - FFI is working with the Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children to **develop a statewide coalition** to expand Farm to Early Education program, with plans to pilot test it in two new communities.
 - They also **hired a Farm to Early Education Associate who is working in Fayette County** to deepen the program in that county with the support of a private family foundation.

- 528 early childhood care providers received training from FFI to promote wellness and engage parents, including an estimated 250 from other parts of the state.
- FFI was able to use the services of a FoodCorps member who is working primarily in Early Childhood settings during the 2016-17 school year. This is a first both for FFI and FoodCorps.
- **Through monthly Farm to Preschool celebrations, 764 contacts were made with parents or other adults who are active in children's lives.**
- **Head Start students engaged in 66 minutes of physical activity per day on average.** This is 6 minutes more than the 60 minutes required by the Head Start wellness policy.
- FFI's Safe Routes to School Program expanded in 2015-16:
 - A total of 32 Walking and Biking School Bus routes walked/biked a total of 363 hours during the school year in 14 communities, involving 275 students and 75 adults.
 - 20 Bike Rodeos were held, involving 1,990 students, and 700 bike helmets were given out.
 - A new Safe Routes to School (SRTS) liaison position was created by Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments and the Iowa Bicycle Coalition to expand SRTS to Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler and Grundy Counties. FFI's SRTS Liaison is mentoring the person in this new position.
 - FFI created a new SRTS Associate position to work part-time to promote active living in the region.
 - Eighty-three youth leaders participated in planning, advocating, and implementing active transportation activities in 2016. This is comparable to 2014 and 2015 totals.
- FFI School Outreach provided 672 hours of nutrition and food education in schools and the community.
- Two schools updated their wellness policies in the 2015-16 school year: MFL Mar-Mac overhauled their wellness policy and St. Joseph added a policy regarding healthy snacks offered during school and sold as fundraisers.
- FFI engaged 148 youth through 15 FFI Youth 4-H Teams in 2015-16.
- 535 students received local foods and nutrition education through cross-age teaching at six schools, where high school youth teach elementary students.
- Four schools had cafeteria coaching teams. Three youth participated in the National 4-H Healthy Living Summit in Washington, DC, where they presented about Cafeteria Coaching.
- Three Food Empowerment Education Sustainability Teams (FEEST) teams met regularly in 2015-16 to cook healthy meals using local ingredients without recipes.
- FFI received a 2016 grant to work with ten regional schools to monitor student weight status in the region.

Systems leadership development

To create systems to support healthy lifestyles in Northeast Iowa, FFI works with partners representing multiple sectors, helping them to agree to common goals and align their activities to reach them. As part of that strategy, **FFI convened three new learning communities in 2016:**

- FFI's School Outreach Coordinator organized a year-long **Systems Leaders Learning Community**. Ten school champions, along with all of the FFI Resource Contacts participated to improve systems leadership skills and collaboratively develop a school wellness project that would move school wellness forward within their districts.
- FFI held a three-day workshop called **Leadership in Community Health Innovation**. Twenty-three leaders from seven communities came away with a Community Action Plan. They continue to participate in a learning community via monthly teleconference calls where they share ideas and support one another in their endeavors. FFI's project director has worked on follow up with five teams to facilitate workshops for the respective communities to create a shared vision for health and well-being.
- FFI is convening **Community Health Stakeholder Workshops** for community hospitals and public health departments in Northeast Iowa. Together they created the first-ever regional Health Improvement Plan, which includes a focus on promoting walking and walkability and healthy eating (fruit and vegetable consumption).