

Clayton County Profile



W.K. Kellogg Foundation Food & Community Partner

Why Food and Fitness?

MFL MarMac schools serve fruits and vegetables as a la carte items on their school lunch lines.

Trevor Arnold, Central PE teacher and FFI 4-H Youth coach, includes a wide variety of activities in his classes, including snowshoeing, paintball, ice fishing, kayaking, and canoeing.

School Spotlights

- The Central FFI 4-H Youth Team promotes health in their school. Activities include:
- Creating a bike trail for elementary students
 - Serving smoothies and turkey sandwiches in the school concession stand during basketball season
 - Packing healthy sack lunches for the basketball team to take along to away games including apples, turkey sandwiches and cheese sticks
 - Organizing a 5k fun run/walk.



The Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative (FFI) is a six-county effort dedicated to creating healthy places where all children and families can thrive. We are working to increase access to affordable, healthy, locally grown food and opportunities for physical activity and play for all. FFI is one of nine Food & Fitness collaboratives supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Food & Community Program.

Obesity is a growing problem all over the United States. Obesity has been linked to chronic diseases, including diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, and some cancers. In fact, a study published in 2012 estimates annual obesity-attributable expenditures in Iowa to be \$1.435 billion¹. It is estimated that obesity and related diseases cause an annual loss of productivity in the U.S. worth \$73.1 billion². In contrast, there is “irrefutable evidence” that physical activity is effective at protecting against

cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, hypertension, obesity, depression and osteoporosis³. Similarly, high fruit and vegetable consumption is linked with lower incidence of cancer, stroke, and heart disease.

Experts agree the best chance of reversing obesity trends include community interventions to change environments and policies. Communities can create a culture where the healthy choice is the easy choice—making healthy food, and space and time for exercise readily available.

To make this a reality, FFI works in three areas: **school wellness**, the **local food economy**, and **active living**. This report highlights FFI’s achievements in Clayton County in these three areas.

¹ Trogdon, J.G., et al. (2012) State- and Payer- Specific Estimates of Annual Medical Expenditures Attributable to Obesity. *Obesity*, 20, 214-220

² Finkelstein, E.A., et al. “The Cost of Obesity in the Workplace.” *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 52(10): 971-976, 2010.

³ Warburton, D.E.R., et al. (2006). Health benefits of physical activity: The evidence. *CMAJ*, 174(6), 801-809.

Clayton County Food and Fitness By the Numbers...

62.1% of adults in Clayton County are overweight or obese

2 in 5 Iowa children are overweight or obese
(2011 Iowa Youth BMI Survey)

\$10,500 awarded to schools in Clayton County for wellness programming

4 school gardens sites are maintained by school and community members at Central, Clayton Ridge, MFL MarMac and St. Mary’s.

401 pounds of vegetables harvested at the Central CSD garden in Fall 2011

27 bicycles collected by Central CSD Elementary School for use in PE classes

118 individuals from Clayton County and **651** partners statewide are connected to FFI’s work

\$2.7 million leveraged for FFI-related work in Northeast Iowa

Active Living Spotlight

Turkey River Recreation Corridor Encourages Fitness and Economic Development

The Turkey River Recreation Corridor (TRRC) is an Iowa Great Place and an FFI success. When FFI began in 2007 they created county teams in each of the six counties involved with FFI to create a county plan. The Fayette County team included several people hoping to build trails to promote fitness and boost the local economy in Fayette and Clayton Counties. They formed a group called the Trails Committee. They broke off from FFI with a solid plan and used their affiliation with the FFI movement as leverage in grant applications to make their plan reality.

In 2009, TRRC was named an Iowa Great Place and was the first region to receive this recognition. Eighteen major projects are included in the Iowa Great Place plan: four projects are planned for each of the towns of Clermont, Elgin, and Elkader; four projects are in place for the Motor Mill Historic Site; and two projects span across both counties. Community projects include a land trail in the Elkader flood zone redevelopment area and a white water course through the downtown. The two area projects include a water trail which was dedicated in July 2011, and a land trail. Phase one of the land trail connecting Clermont to Elgin was dedicated in August 2012 at the bridge near Valley Community School District. The TRRC has been able to raise over three million dollars in grant money for their projects!

In addition, the TRRC hosts summer events to introduce residents of Fayette and Clayton Counties to the recreation corridor. First, the Turkey River Safari adventure hunt starts Memorial Day weekend and continues through Labor Day weekend. The Safari targets families with young children, but anyone can participate. Registered participants pick up a free

Safari Adventure Kit at any public library in Clayton or Fayette County or at the Osborn Nature Center in Elkader. The kit includes a drawstring backpack, a Safari map, a guidebook, a pack of four crayons, and a Turkey River water



trail map. The safari map identifies 20 locations along the TRRC included in the Safari. Destinations include Goeken County Park, Gouldsburg Park, the Burkhard Riegel Blacksmith Shop, the Lincoln Statue, the Big Springs Trout Hatchery, the Motor Mill National Historic Site, and more. Once at each site, participants use their guide book to locate a post and make a rubbing in their guide book using a crayon. Participants who visit 15 of the 20 sites during the summer can return their guidebook to the location from which they received their Adventure Kit and register for a chance to win a T-shirt. By the end of June 2012, 49 families had registered for the Safari.

The TRRC is also partnering with Iowa Rivers Revival to plan events like the Turkey River Rock. Canoers and kayakers float down the Turkey River from Elkader to the Motor Mill Historic Site. During the float, they hear a presentation about being 'river barometers' who assess the health of the river as they float down it. The float is followed with a local meal of fish and sweet corn along with live music at the Motor Mill.

To learn more, visit www.turkeyrivercorridor.com

Northeast Iowa Food & Farm Coalition Mini-grants Support Local Food Businesses in Clayton County

Local Food Economy Spotlight

The Northeast Iowa Food & Farm Coalition (NIFF) has awarded several Producer Mini-grants in Clayton County since 2008. Between 2008 and 2012, \$11,775 has been distributed by the NIFF Coalition in the county to support local food businesses and enterprises with a total of \$79,773 leveraged. Twenty-six grants were awarded during that time to 22 different producers. At least four new enterprises were funded and another 13 businesses were expanded.

Projects supported by NIFF mini-grants include beekeeping equipment, a walk behind tractor for vegetable production, remodeling of a food store, a hoop building for poultry and another for sows,

farmers market signs, fencing for grass-fed beef, a high tunnel, a garden tiller, and a harvest wagon, to name a few.

The variety of producers participating in the mini-grants is one piece of evidence that the local food system is growing in strength in Clayton County. In September 2011, the Clayton County Foundation for the Future hosted a meal for its donors and partners featuring a menu of foods grown or made in Clayton County. For example, the appetizers included a smoked fish dip from Produce Too in Guttenberg and fresh fruit from producer Jim Fox of Monona.

Vic and Kay Vifian's Nature Haven Farm is one that has been supported by the

NIFF Coalition. Nature Haven Farm produces greens sold locally. They take orders through e-mail and deliver to pick-up points. They will soon add two more greenhouses to their operation and plan to sell cut flowers in the future. The Vifians have seen the number of local producers increase to where they are now organizing an on-line food cooperative with the help of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.



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



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach

