

Project collaborators:

Practical Farmers of Iowa
GROWN Locally
Iowa Farm Bureau Federation
Iowa Network for Community Agriculture
Leopold Center for Sustainable
Agriculture
University of Northern Iowa Local Food
Project
Johnson County Soil & Water
Conservation District
Sioux Rivers Resource Conservation &
Development, Inc.
Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land
Stewardship
Iowa State University Extension Value
Added Agriculture Program

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Members and supporters of PFI's Local Food Brokering Project grower's network.

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Why buy local:

- Iowa hotels, restaurants, and other institutions spend over \$750 million each year on food - a huge market largely untapped by Iowa farmers.¹
- Local food travels an average 45 miles from Iowa farm to institution, but sourced nationally the distance is more than 1,500 miles.² Environmental benefits include less fuel used and reduced CO₂ emitted in food transport.
- Local foods are often fresher and better tasting because they are usually raised for taste rather than transportability and they are typically (in the case of produce) purchased within 24 hours of being harvested.
- Using local foods in local institutions circulates dollars in the community, providing an economic multiplier effect.
- Using local foods in local institutions helps diversify our farms, which means greater diversity in landscapes, cropping systems, and cultures and traditions.

¹ *Practical Farmers of Iowa Grocery and HRI Study Final Report*. April 2000. Scanlan & Associates. Ames, IA.
² *Food, Fuel, and Freeways: An Iowa perspective on how far food travels, fuel usage, and greenhouse gas emissions*. June 2001. Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture. Ames, IA.

Local Foods & Institutional Food Services: A Match for Iowa's Future



Tom Singer, Food Service Director for Sodexo at the Iowa Farm Bureau dining facility in West Des Moines

Projects across Iowa are helping institutions use foods from local farmers. Here are some examples and reasons to support the development of these markets.

This brochure is a product of a project titled "Expanding Local Food Systems by Marketing to Iowa Institutions."

Funding for the project came in part from the Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program of the Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Local Food Brokering Project of Practical Farmers of Iowa (PFI)

This project helps broker foods from farmers to central Iowa hotels and conference centers doing all-Iowa meals for clients. Features include a seasonal menu for use by institutions, a central contact point for orders, a 27-member grower's network, an email system for communicating with members of the grower's network, deliveries by farmers and payments directly to farmers, and a fee system for generating revenues to support the service.

Iowa Farm Bureau Dining Facility Project

This effort works to serve local foods at the dining facility in the Iowa Farm Bureau headquarters in West Des Moines, which is operated by Sodexo, a food service company. For liability concerns, farmers must sell through Loffredo Fresh Produce Co., a produce distributor, and SYSCO Food Services, a supplier of main plate products such as meats. The main focus has been on creating linkages with produce farmers who sell to Loffredo, which in turn sells to the dining facility at Farm Bureau.

Johnson County Local Food Project

This effort of the Johnson County Soil & Water Conservation District facilitates direct relationships between farmers and institutions in Johnson County. Features include facilitating communication between farmers and restaurants, providing pricing information to farmers,



Chef Kurt Friese, owner of Devotay and chef/owner of Adagio, both located in Johnson County

publishing informational materials including a local food directory, and conducting promotions using local foods.

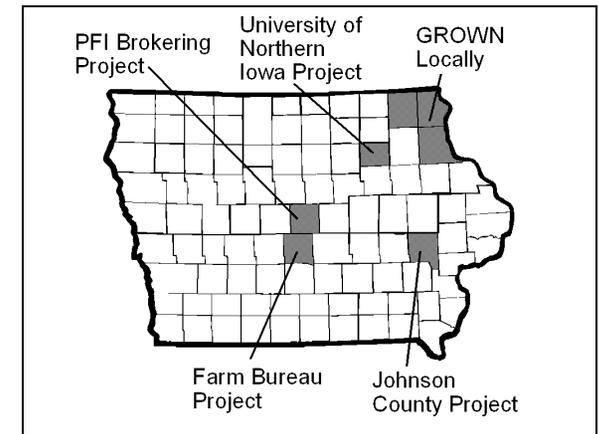
University of Northern Iowa Local Food Project

This effort started with the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) developing new markets for local farmers at UNI, Allen Hospital, and a restaurant named Rudy's Tacos. The project then expanded to additional facilities, bringing the total to ten institutions. Features include interns who hold initial meetings with buyers, growers and processors where prices, ordering methods, and delivery procedures are discussed. They then call growers on order days to find out what is available, with buyers using this information to place orders through the interns. Growers deliver and are paid individually by the institutions. Once

relationships are established, buyers and farmers begin working directly.

GROWN Locally

GROWN (which stands for Goods Raised Only With Nature) Locally is a coop that helps its members sell their foods to institutions in a three-county area. Features include preseason contacts with clients followed by a system for making sales that is repeated on a weekly basis during the growing season. The system starts with farmers sending emails on Sunday of product availability to a central contact. This information is used for product lists with prices that are faxed to buyers. Buyers place orders by 5 pm Tuesday, and emails orders are sent to coop members who deliver to a member's farm by 8 am Thursday where the foods are washed and packed for delivery that day. One member makes deliveries, and payments come to GROWN Locally, which then pays its members.



Additional information on these projects is available in a report titled "Expanding Local Food Systems by Marketing to Iowa Institutions: Descriptions of Five Local Projects, Key Issues and Suggestions for Success," which is available by contacting PFI (contact info is on the back).