



Bites from Healthy Harvest of North Iowa

Fall 2017

Restaurants, Grocers Dig into Local Food

The local food scene got a boost this summer from an increasing number of restaurants and chefs specifically looking to add local product to their menus. Two restaurants - **Fieldhouse** in Clear Lake and **Café Mir** in Fertile - claim a Farm to Fork menu, featuring in-season products that change from week to week. **Taste by Uncs Cheesecakes** of Osage, just unrolled a new winter menu filled with local product features (*photo to right is their Gastro Pub Burger*).



Andrea Berger, of **Bean & Bistro** in Northwood, has been a farmers' market demo chef and hosted the Worth Co. Farm to Fork. **Willies Sports Bar** in Hampton participated in the second annual Hampton Main Street Restaurant Crawl and followed up with **Purple Ribbon Beef** to plan continued opportunities to feature their beef.

Add to this, increased grocery purchases of local food. Six North Iowa grocers have increased their local food purchases by 36% from **North Iowa Fresh**, in addition to those made from individual producers and the **Cedar Valley Produce Auction**.

Together these developments create important new market for producers and new access to local food across the season for consumers. The more customers vote with their fork to encourage these businesses to expand their local purchases, the more growth we will see in these dollars being returned to our local farmers and producers.

Farmers Markets are for Celebrating

In August, we partied for **National Farmers Market Week** with activities at our local area markets. We were serving up samples from our **blender bike**, sponsored by **Wayne's Ski & Cycle** in Mason City, that used some leg power to mix up some farmers' market ingredients for seasonal smoothies. We featured delicious **recipe demonstrations** using local products by talented local chefs including Lisa Ficken and Katie DiMarco from Mason City Schools, Ted Smalley of Hy-Vee in Charles City, Andrea Berger of the new **Bean & Bistro** in



Northwood, Megan Conlon of Franklin General Hospital, and Ashley Coleman from BeWellness in Clear Lake. We also had **kids coloring competitions**, I heart Farmers Market **temporary tattoos**, **vendor samples**, and more! Thanks to all who came out to celebrate with us – we're looking forward to more fun next season!

Local Food Conference in N. IA?

We have gathered a steering committee together with a vision is to create an interactive gathering that inspires and promotes a *deeper appreciation and understanding* of how to engage in the local food system. We're still negotiating the timeline of this event, but keep an eye out for more details!

Our Work Is Stronger Because of the Support We Have from These Sponsors

CL Tel, POET Biorefining of Hanlontown, Mercy of North Iowa, Hearing Associates Ltd., of Mason City, First Bank Hampton, County Board of Supervisors in Cerro Gordo, Floyd, Franklin, Mitchell, Winnebago, and Worth Counties.

Local Food Coalition Reviews Priorities at October Meeting

The North Iowa Local Food Coalition's Summer Meeting was held on July 6 featuring priority project updates and a preliminary discussion on Farm to School in North Iowa. **Our next quarterly meeting will be held Monday, Nov. 13th from 1-3pm at the North Iowa Landfill's Education Center in Clear Lake.** Join us as we review our core priorities and review our direction going into 2018.

Farm to School Planning



October is National Farm to School month, and we're celebrating by continuing to develop our **USDA Farm to School Planning Grant application** alongside representatives from West

Fork, Hampton-Dumont/CAL, and Mason City Community School Districts and Katelyn Nicholson from Cerro Gordo County Dept. of Public Health. The proposal, if funded, will allow further research into the sourcing of local products for the cafeterias, and exploration of utilizing on-site production in educational programming in the classroom.

New Grants Awarded

We're proud to announce we've been awarded the following grants: **A Rural Business Development Grant** will be supporting a new Local Food Business Learning Network; **A Working Here grant from Farm Credit Services of America** that lent support to the Franklin Farm to Fork event and support a fieldtrip to immerse Hampton-Dumont High School culinary arts students into the emerging local food businesses in North Iowa; and finally a new **Wellmark Foundation Small Community MATCH Grant** that will support nutrition education equipment and curriculum for use with pre-diabetes classes and local farmers' markets in 2018.

New HHNI Members



Thank you to Jean McAleer, Mason City and Bart & Marianne Waters, Michigan for recently becoming Healthy Harvest members! Consider joining them and the growing number of North Iowans and out of state friends who support North Iowa's local food work at:

healthyharvestni.com/membership.

Fall Farm Fresh Events:

2017 has been a busy season for Farm Fresh Events. To date, six agri-tourism events were successfully held this season, including:

Hancock Co. Fresh on the Farm tour, **Mitchell Co. Farm to Fork Dinner** in Osage, **Worth Co. Farm to Fork Dinner** in Northwood, **Hampton's Main Street Restaurant**

Crawl, Floyd Co. Farm to Fork Dinner in Charles City, and the **Clear Lake Community Farm to Fork Dinner** in Fertile. Each event was organized by a team of local partners to bring their community together around featuring local products prepared by local chefs, or seeing the farm where those products are grown. Anyone who has attended these events can attest their powerful capacity for networking, inspiring new faces to get involved in the work, and deepening the involvement of the participating partners. While these types of events are wrapped up for the season, but sure to **watch the Healthy Harvest website Calendar of Events** for other local area events.



Sponsor update

We are pleased to announce sponsorship from Hearing Associates Ltd., who pledged at the Local Food Champion Level (>\$5,000) and **Thank you to all our Healthy Harvest sponsors!** Learn how your organization or business can sponsor our work at: healthyharvestni.com/BecomeASponsor

Get Involved with HHNI

We welcome you to get involved! If you like what you're seeing and want to be a part of the dynamic, exciting and flavorful movement that is local food system work, we'd love to partner! **We invite folks interested in our Fundraising Committee, Program Committee, or other opportunities.** Contact Jan at jan@healthyharvestni.com or 515-851-1690.