**RFSWG Local Food Activities Success and Why**

During the December 2012 RFSWG meeting 7 or more regional groups identified these 5 areas as current projects.

1. Food Hubs  
2. Buy Fresh Buy Local – Local Foods Marketing Campaigns  
3. Coalition Building  
4. Training/Workshops  
5. Events

Meeting participants were asked to contribute to the knowledge of what makes these activities successful and what changes occur as a result of these activities.

**Food Hubs**

How do you know you’ve been successful? What changed?

- Increasing sales (store)  
- Increase local food economy (farmers, consumers)  
- Partners, support within community  
- Sponsors  
- Moving on with the next phase -> community kitchen, gardens

What were your strategies?

- Location, Signage, Literature  
- “Awareness”  
- Open House  
- Media, website, facebook, marketing  
- Building support  
- Web presence-platform  
- Training  
- Consistent, practical policies, payment & process  
- Good definition (agreed upon) of what a food hub is

Who were your partners?

- City Levee Commission  
- Mayor  
- Specific Board members  
- Community leaders,  
- YMCA  
- Nahant Marsh (PAV-IA)  
- Farmers  
- Consumers  
- Volunteers  
- Tourism  
- Economic development  
- Extension
Buy Fresh Buy Local – Local Food Marketing Campaign

How do you know you’ve been successful? What changed?
- Increased membership (Farmers; Markets, Producers, Buyers, Orgs)
- Increased collaboration form newspapers for distribution
- Increased sales from BFB: farms
- Consumer education (“Tip of the Week”)

What were your strategies?
- Updating marketing/visibility = “new face”
- Enewsletters
- Mailings
- Press Releases
- Website
- Facebook
- One person at a time
- Signed agreement to provide survey data

Who were your partners?
- Farmers
- IDALS Extension
- Hy-Vee
- Farmers Market managers
- Jones Regional Medical Center
- Restaurants
- Consumers
Coalition Building

How do you know you’ve been successful? What changed?

- Increased number of markets
- Increased consumers
- Diverse groups
- Has bona fide Food Coordinator
- Funding!!!
- Sustained activity
- Sustained relationships

What were your strategies?

- Building list serves, community calendars
- Keeping all those involved on the same page up to date on events
- Community work days
- Volunteers
- Attend events, conferences, gatherings
- Convene meetings of diverse groups
- Connect individual, groups

Who were your partners?

- IDALS
- NRCD
- FSA
- IADA
- Working Groups
- Community members
- Hospitals
- Churches
- Processors
- Community College
- Producers
- IDPH
- Extension – 4-H
- Schools
- Iowa Food Systems Council
- Food Corps
- County Supervisors
- Food Banks
- Food Buyers
- Lutheran Services of Iowa

Discussion regarding importance of institutional support for regional groups; some housed with Extension, RCD, others independent non-profits.
Training/Workshops

How do you know you’ve been successful? What changed?

- Repeat attendance (people come back)
- Actions taken related to training
- Attendance increases
- Participants share info (with other producers)
- Surveys, evaluations, follow up
- Participants want more info/training
- More participants than staff
- Conversations continue after training
- When level of engagement changes

What were your strategies?

- Sponsors help populate group of training participants
- Workshops developed to provide timely information on topics of interest (food safety, branding our region, market strategies)
- Farmer to Farmer Potlucks (casual, etc.)
- Utilize current, existing groups of producers to identify gaps in knowledge/skills – have them involved.
- Borrow good curriculum instead of recreating
- Collaborate with other groups
- Know your presenter and their abilities, etc (Have successful experiences, time (not going over on time)
- Use produces/experts/panels
- Needs assessment
- Show the positives, benefits of training for participants
- Get word out to target audiences

Who were your partners?

- ISU Extension (campus, local, field staff)
- Indian Hills Community College (culinary Arts)
- SARE
- Local Food Coordinators
- Farmers Market coordinators
- Beginning Farmer Venter
- NRCS
- RC&D
  Agricultural producers! = DRIVERS
- State department – inspection, appeals, IDALS
  Federal Departments
- Location partner (marketing, et-up, etc.)
- Funding partners/sponsors (Banks, Co-ops, Professional Services)
Events
Event Ideas:
Farm Crawl/Farm to Fork
Bike & Bite
Herbs in the Hills Festival
Iron Chef Contests
Culinary Bike Tour
Soups on Saturday
Heirloom Tomato Dinner
Chef’s Potluck
Fine Dining in the Field
School Farmers Market
Spring Fling

How do you know you’ve been successful? What changed?
• 100% of food served in local
• Money gained for event
• I can live without grants
• Increased number of people attending
• The event runs without external input
• The event is duplicated at other places
• Testimonials
• Enough volunteers
• Engaged volunteers
• Plenty of media coverage
• People ask to donate
• Number of people who volunteer/partner
• More planning for next year
• Anticipation of future dates

What were your strategies?
• Marketing/Publicity
• Coordinating ‘like-minded’ people
• Standard event checklist
• Farm Crawl-Online Strategy guide
• Setting a back up date
• Coordinating dates with other events and setting date early
• Organizing volunteers and keeping them busy
• Matching producers with consumers and chefs
• Talk with schools about local food an the event
• Collaboration with together businesses/organization with similar attributes
• Planning committee
• Partnership utilization
• Publicize success

Who were your partners?
Regional Food Systems Working Group (RFSWG)
Spring 2013 Quarterly Meeting Breakout Session

- BFBL
- ISU Extension
- Economic/Tourism Development groups
- Chamber of Commerce
- Visitor Centers – Scenic Byways
- Young professionals
- PFI
- Culinary Arts Programs
- Community Co-ops
- Solid Waste/Recycle Me Iowa
- Conservation/County resources
- Local restaurants/chefs
- Community activists/consumers
- Musicians
- Financial institutions
- Ameri-Corps