



“In the winter of 2011 the Iowa Corridor Food and Agriculture Coalition surveyed 10 regional institutions that accounted for over \$2.7 million in local food purchases from farmers, bakers, butchers, ... in the region.”

SUSTAINING & STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITIES WITH A COMMUNITY BASED FOOD SYSTEM

**Planning for Food & Agriculture: Taking a Systems Approach:
County and Community Based Planning 12.13.11**



Regional Population

500,000

Cedar Rapids

126,000

Iowa City

68,000

Iowa

3 Million



Jason Grimm – Food System Planner
 Iowa Valley Resource Conservation & Development
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Topics and Agenda

- **Why our Region took a Community Based Approach?**
 - The Coalition's Strategic Plan
- **The ingredients we are striving for in our Food System**
- Where our work is being focused & how is it being driven
 - **Obstacles & Successes**

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



Why our Region took a Community Based Approach?

*“We must learn to invest as if food, farms and fertility mattered. We must connect investors to the places where they live, **creating vital relationships** and new sources of capital for small food enterprises.”*

Slow Money Principle IV – Woody Tasch



10 times the number of
conversations while shopping at a
farmers market than at a
supermarket

what is a community based food system ?

A food system is the chain of activities connecting food production, processing, distribution, marketing, consumption, and waste management. **It includes the diverse agriculture system that produces our food, the natural resource base and the people that live and work in the region (in the past, present and future).**

The Linn-Johnson Local Food Task Force was organized in 2007 and was made up of community members and public organizations

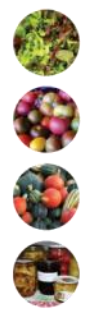
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**LINN/JOHNSON
LOCAL FOOD
TASK FORCE**

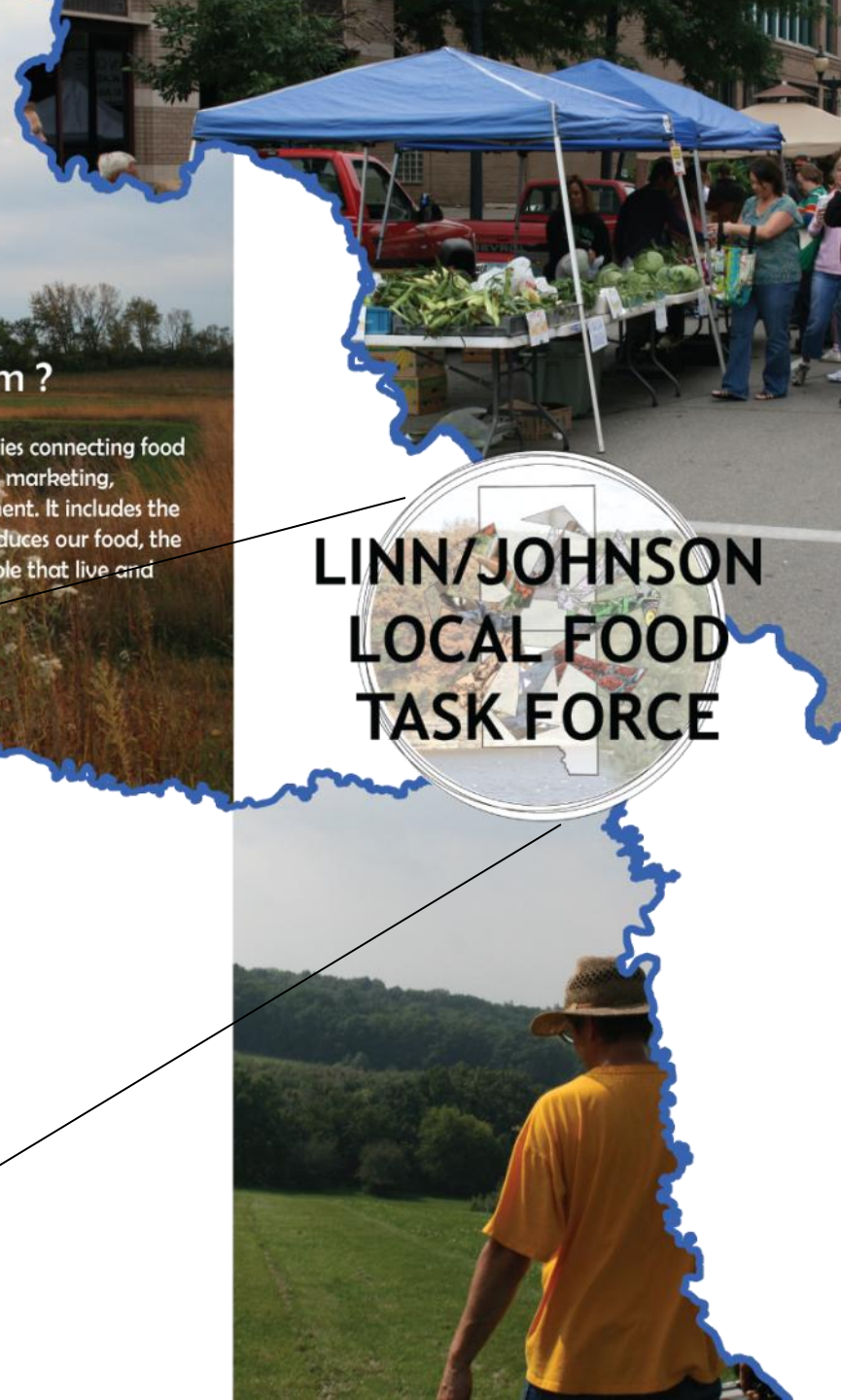

March 2010

**A HEALTHY SEASONAL
LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM PLAN**
for the IOWA CORRIDOR FOOD & AGRICULTURE COALITION



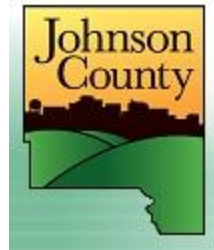
Developing strategic partnerships to revitalize a local food system within the Iowa Corridor Region

A corridor that embraces local foods in a diversified and environmentally conscious agricultural community; serving as a hub for a revitalized regional food system





Prairie Ventures



Food network

Task force plan supports fresh local food and its producers



The Linn/Johnson Food Task Force has made more than 80 recommendations on how the Corridor can strategically support locally grown food and local food producers, from land-use policies to curbside composting.

By Cindy Hadish
The Gazette

Longtime vegetable farmers like Fred Johnson will be seen in a new light under a plan to increase the availability of local foods in Linn and Johnson counties.

After more than two years of work, the Linn/Johnson Local Food Task Force has issued its strategic food system plan for the Corridor.

Among the proposals, residents could someday see curbside composting, similar to curbside recycling programs; new community gardens; and financial incentives to encourage local food production.

Besides farmers like Johnson, 71, of rural Shellsburg, who sells spinach, corn, ber-

ries and more at farmers markets, local food systems include consumers, butchers, truck drivers, local grocers and others, said Jason Grimm of the Iowa Valley Resource Conservation and Development.

Those people connect food production, consumption and waste management. In that sense, everyone who buys food from Linn to Johnson counties will be affected by the plan.

"Food provides a place where relationships and interaction can happen," said Grimm, who has been coordinating efforts of the task force.

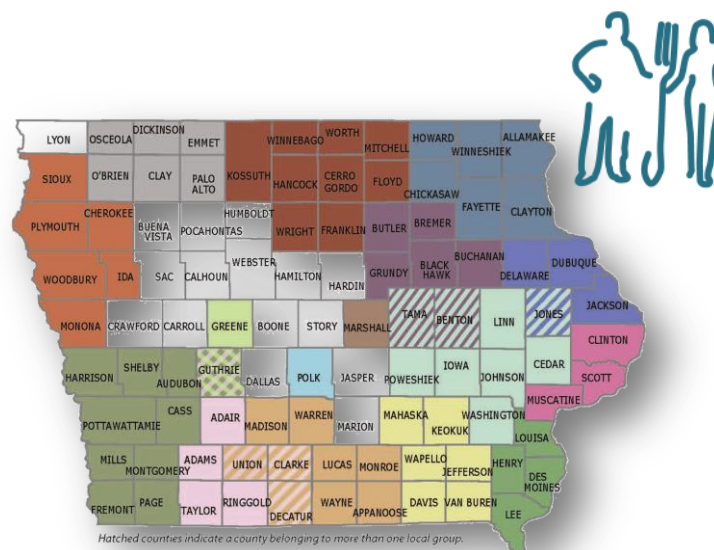
On the Net
For more information, see <http://johnsonlinn-local-food.webs.com>

Local food events

- **FOOD CO-OP MEETING:** 10 a.m. to noon today, Marion Public Library, 1095 Sixth Ave. Discussion about establishing a food-buying cooperative, one component of the strategic food plan. Orders are placed online from a list of products available from local farmers, who bring their products to a central distribution point on an appointed day. The Iowa Food Cooperative in Des Moines is interested in expanding to this area, which could jump-start the process.
- **LINN COUNTY LOCAL FARMER & CSA FAIR:** 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Prairie Woods Franciscan Spirituality Center, 120 E. Boyson Rd., Hawaia. Potential customers can meet community-supported agriculture farmers.
- **IOWA CITY CSA FAIR:** 1 to 4 p.m. April 10, Robert A. Lee Community Recreation Center Social Hall, 220 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City.

► **FOOD, PAGE 9A**

In March of 2010 the Task Force released their strategic food system plan and in the Summer of 2010 the Group became a member of the IA Regional Food System Working Group



Iowa has 16 independent regional working groups

A HEALTHY SEASONAL LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM PLAN

for the IOWA CORRIDOR FOOD & AGRICULTURE COALITION



Developing strategic partnerships to revitalize a local food system within the Iowa Corridor Region

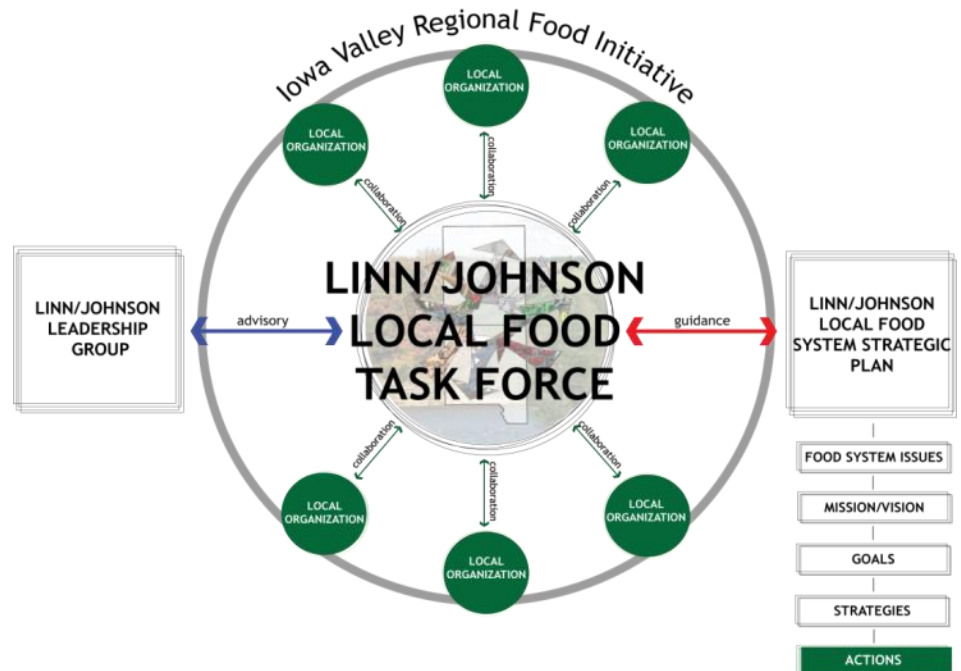


A corridor that embraces local foods in a diversified and environmentally conscious agricultural community; serving as a hub for a revitalized regional food system



The Coalition's Strategic Plan

- the issues
- the problems
- the recommendations
- the local food system plan



Strategic Plan Goals

- Ensure the **viability** of existing and beginning local food producers and local food entrepreneurs that market products in the local food system
- Increase the **infrastructure** that forms the foundation of the local food system
- Increase the **availability** of healthy seasonal locally grown food in the region
- Strengthen the local food **marketing** campaign and ensure **access** to healthy seasonal and affordable food for all residents
- Increase the **knowledge** and understanding of food purchasing, preparation and preservation amongst consumers
- Ensure the **recycling, reuse and reduction** of waste as nutrients in the local food system



**The ingredients we are striving for in our
Food System**

Food and Farm Entrepreneurs

Infrastructure: farmland, processing facilities, farmers markets, produce auctions, co-packers, distributors

Local & Independent Retail: producer co-op, independent grocery store

Engaged Consumers

Engaged Businesses and Institutions

Civic Investment/Community Pride

Leaders & Champions: elected officials, policy councils

Policy Commitments & Change: regulatory and development strategies at appropriate scales

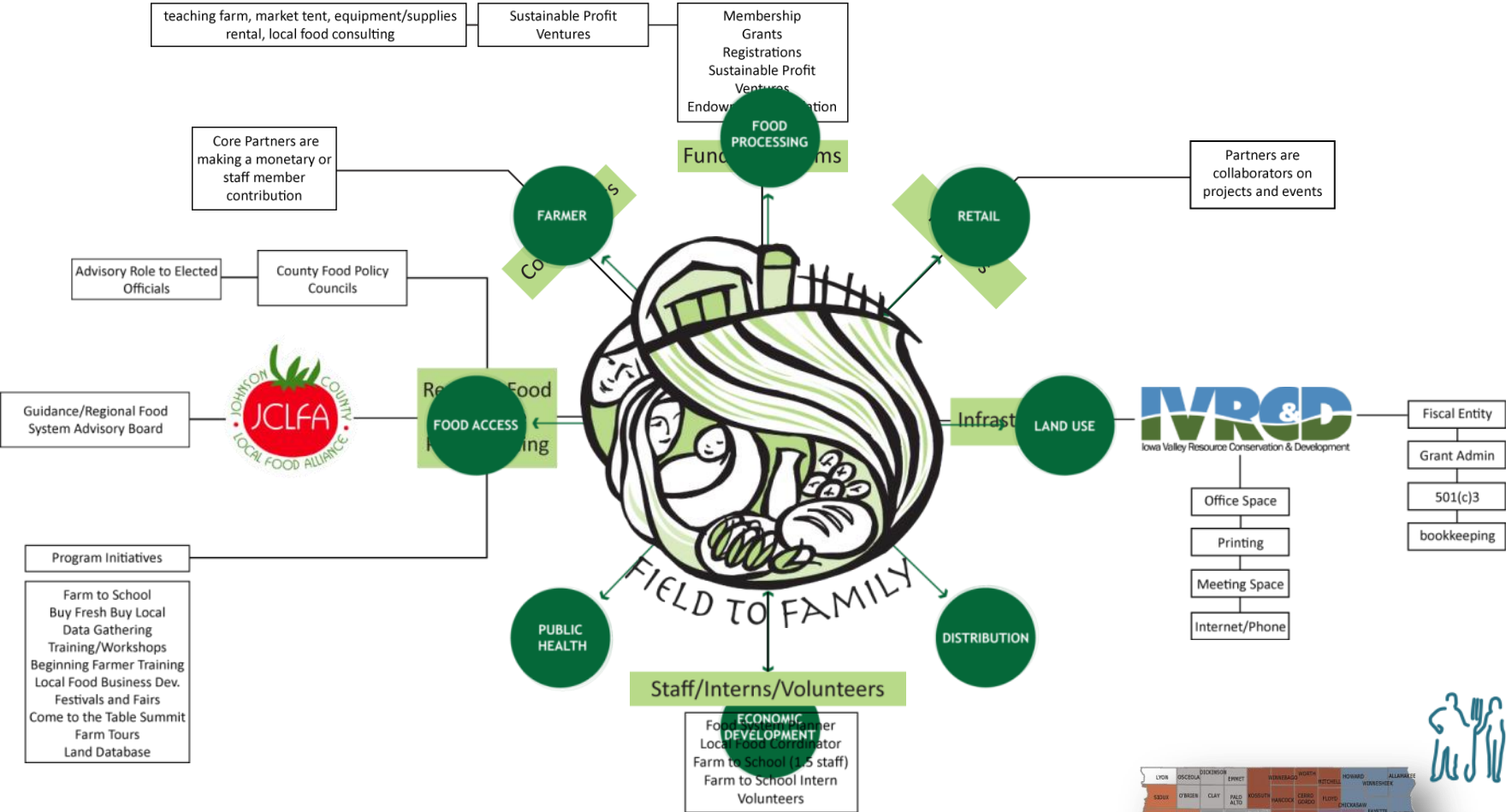
Network Weaving and Collaboration





**Where our work is being focused
& how is it being driven**

Shared leadership



78 Recommendations as part of the plan

Viability – 17 Recommendations

1. Establish a low interest small business loan program
2. Establish a Education & Training Grant Program
3. Develop a series of workshops both existing and beginning farmers
4. Establish a land bank that can be used for local food production by beginning producers

Availability – 14 Recommendations

1. Create workshops related to organic and sustainable ways of gardening
2. Establish programs that purchase scholarships and/or sponsorships for lower income families

Infrastructure – 5 Recommendations

1. Conduct an inventory and needs analysis of all semi-public certified kitchens as community supported kitchens

local food producer education & training program

Beginning Farmer Education & Training Workshops

Iowa Valley Resource Conservation and Development



Funding support of up to \$250 to producers while attending education or training workshops

local farmer

Education & Training Grant Program



78 Recommendations as part of the plan

Marketing & Access – 20 Recommendations

1. Implement the Iowa Valley Food Co-op
2. Establish an annual Local Farm & Food Expo for farmers and buyers
3. Establish a Corridor Buy Fresh Buy Local Chapter
4. Develop year around markets in Cedar Rapids & Iowa City

Knowledge – 15 Recommendations

1. Provide a local food system curriculum into schools
2. Develop brochures, posters, pamphlets, etc. and the real cost of food
3. Organize and host Local Farmer & CSA Fairs in the region
4. Publish a calendar of events
5. Host Culinary Walks in our Region

WELCOME

COME TO THE TABLE

local food summit for
producers & purchasers



IOWA VALLEY
FOOD CO-OP



Try some salad
it tastes great!!

Today is...

SPRING GREENS DAY

Serving farm fresh, local salad greens for lunch

June 1st
at all ICCSD schools

ICCSD Farm to School Program
A project of the Johnson Co Local Food Alliance
www.icjfa.org/farm_to_school.htm

Logos: JCLFA, ICCSD, IJCFA, Solimates, unfi, New Pioneer Food Co-op

2nd annual

Linn County LOCAL FARMER & CSA FAIR

building relationships between
farmers and the community

April 1, 2011 5-8 PM

Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center
more info call 319.395.6700
120 E. Boyson Road
Hiawatha, IA 52233

sponsored by:



Various food growing farmers will have information available for those interested in finding out how to add fresh vegetables and herbs to your diet throughout the Iowa growing season.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a way for consumers and farmers to join together in support of local agriculture. Members purchase a share of the harvest in advance of the growing season. In return you receive a weekly supply of high-quality, locally grown fresh vegetables and herbs throughout the growing season. CSA is also a way of sharing risk with food growing farmers. Shares purchased prior to the season help the farm plan for costs and quantities of growing fresh produce. This also helps the farm weather difficult times. On the flip-side, there are benefits for shareholders when the harvest is great. If, for example, the squash or cucumber harvest is heavy the CSA boxes will have a large quantity of those items. When harvest time arrives, you'll receive vegetables and herbs fresher than any you can find in stores. Many of these farmers are also organic.

Snacks/drinks along with music and children's activities

additional sponsors include: Iowa Power Fund Board and the Iowa Office of Energy Independence

CHEW on THIS!

a local foods showcase





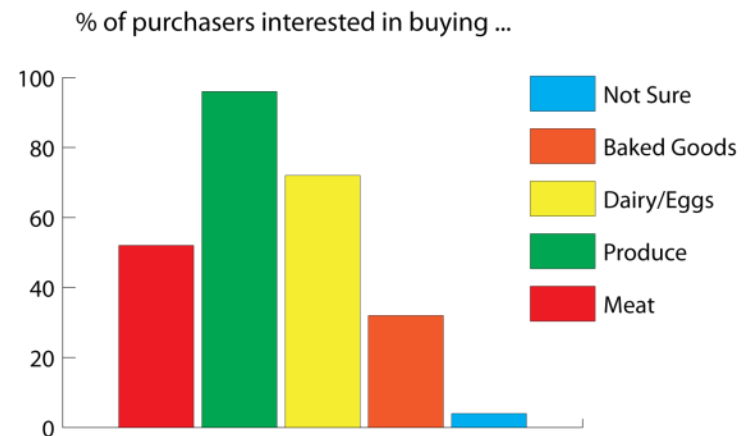
Obstacles & Successes

Measuring Success

Collecting Annual Metrics

Collect the following metrics to evaluate the progress of the ICFAC's work at achieving their six goals

1. The viability of regional food producers and entrepreneurs
2. Establish a benchmark of the availability of locally grown food
3. Inventory local food sales to establish a 10 year goal for a percent growth of local food purchases in the region
4. Track the development of consumer knowledge on food purchasing, preservation, and preparation



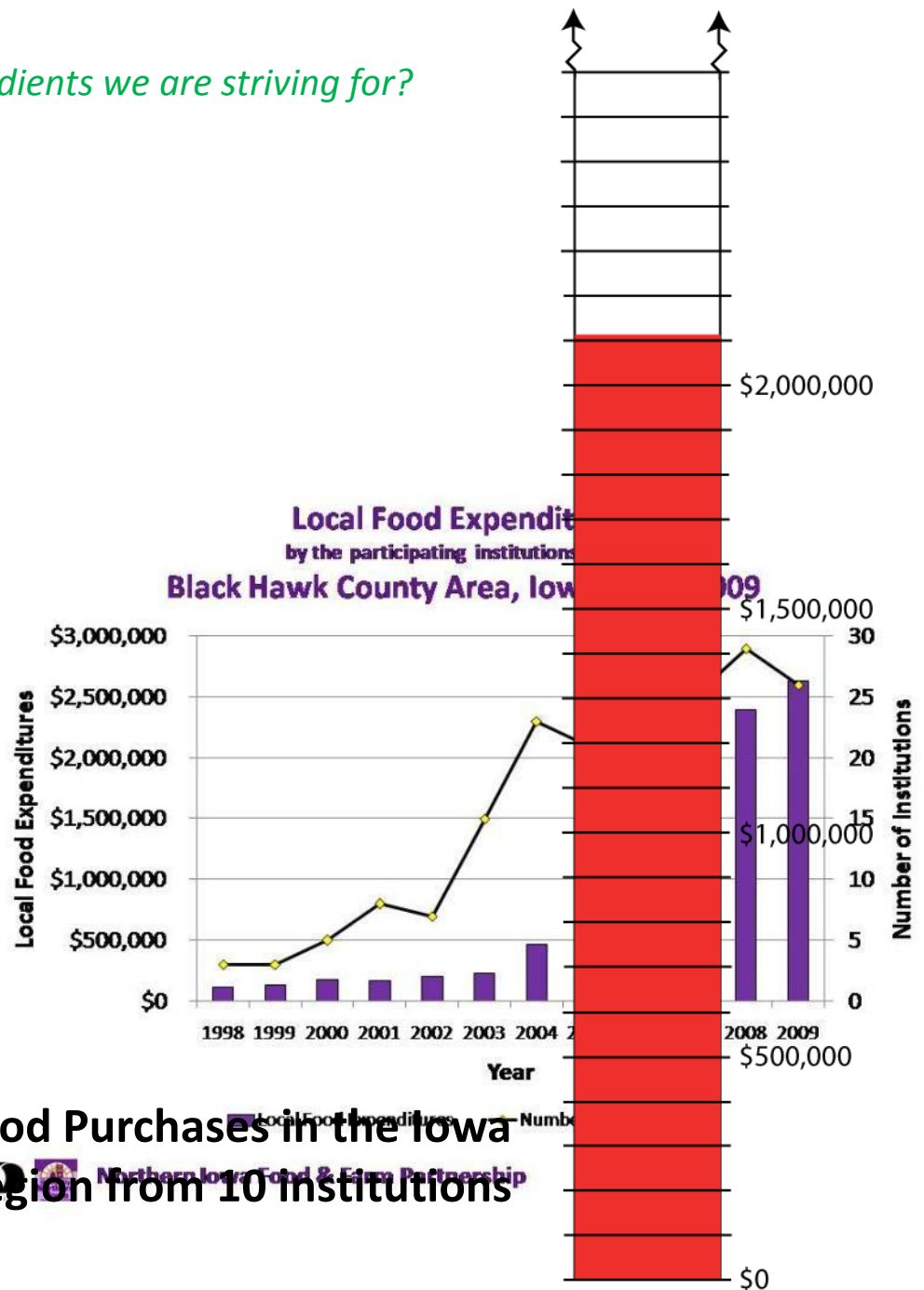
Obstacles

1. Infrastructure
2. Diversity of Production
3. Entrance into Agriculture
4. Transformation
5. Distribution



Successes – have we implemented the ingredients we are striving for?

1. Food and Farm Entrepreneurs
2. Infrastructure
3. Local & Independent Retail
4. Engaged Consumers
5. Engaged Businesses and Institutions
6. Civic Investment/Community Pride
7. Leaders & Champions
8. Policy Commitments & Change
9. Network Weaving and Collaboration
10. Full time staffing





The Iowa Corridor Food & Agriculture Coalition's vision requires a **collaborative** effort of **community** members that includes: leaders, institutions, farmers, churches, schools, organizations, grocers, truckers, bakers, students, families, and many more...



IOWA

Corridor

Food & Agriculture

Coalition

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