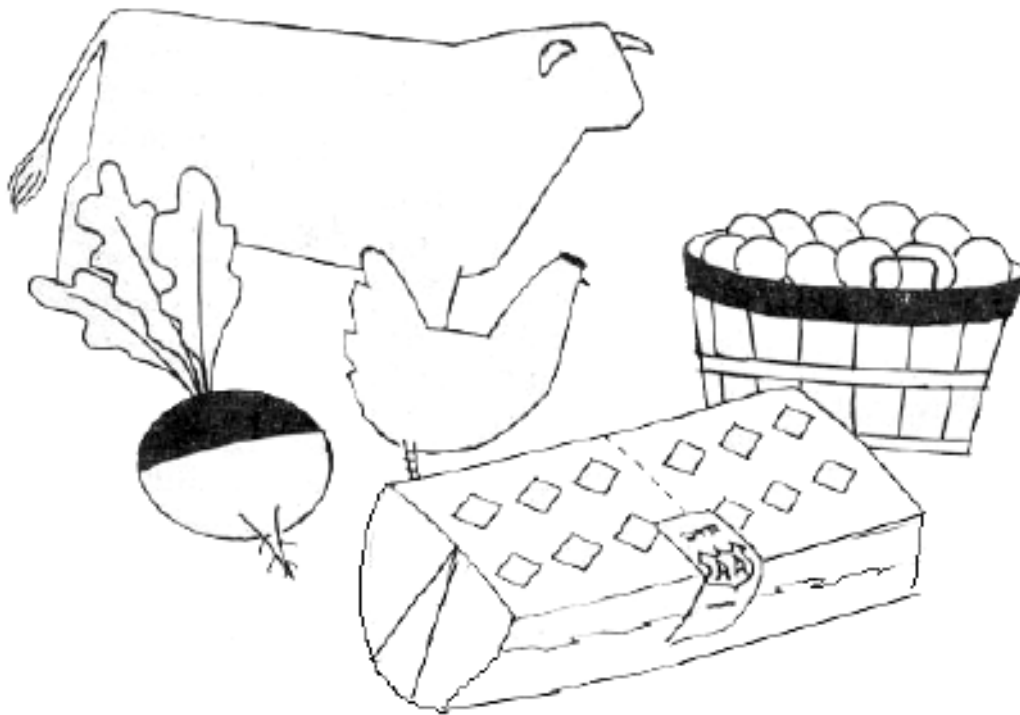
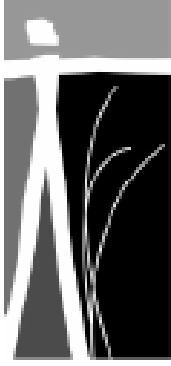


Directory of Grinnell Area Food Producers Who Market Locally

April 2008





Center for Prairie Studies

This directory provides information about locally produced foods in the Grinnell area. It contains a listing of area producers and the foods they raise and sell, along with information about how to contact them and where to buy their products. It also contains a listing of regional farmers markets and community supported agriculture (CSA) organizations.

This directory is a publication of the Center for Prairie Studies at Grinnell College, in association with the Grinnell Area Local Food Alliance (GALFA). We have included as many of the region's producers as we were able to contact. If you are a local producer but not listed in this directory and would like to be in future editions, please contact the Center for Prairie Studies office at 641-269-4720. This directory is also available online at <http://www.grinnell.edu/cps/Resources/Publications/publications.htm>.

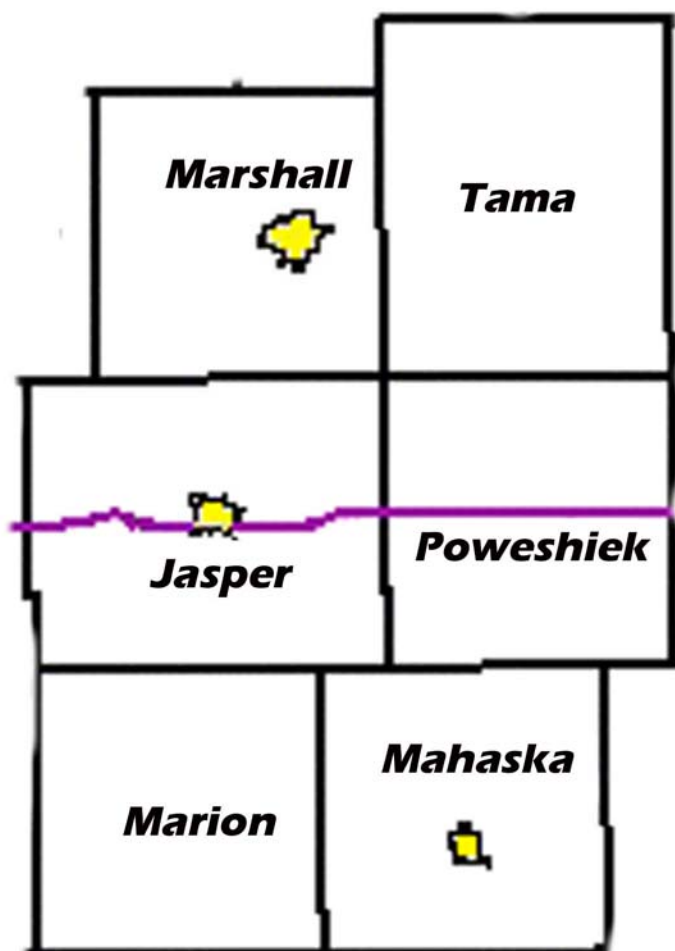
For state-wide listings of growers who direct-market vegetables, fruits, meat, eggs, and other foods, consult the Iowa Department of Agriculture's webpage: www.agriculture.state.ia.us.

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Key Reasons for Buying Locally Grown Food

Freshness and taste- Locally grown fruits and vegetables are usually harvested within 24 hours of being purchased. Produce picked and eaten at the height of ripeness tastes better. Produce imported from distant places is often harvested unripe, treated with preservatives, and bred for long distance shipping and lengthy storage.

Variety- Farmers markets can offer produce varieties bred for taste and beauty rather than for shipping and long shelf life. Also, local producers often raise types of vegetables and fruits not available in supermarkets.

Regional economic vitality- If every Iowan spent only \$10 a week on locally grown food, it would amount to \$1.5 billion every year invested in local people, local farms, and independent local businesses.

Food security- Dependence on distant food sources leaves us vulnerable to supply disruptions and reduces any real accountability and relationship between producers and consumers

Food safety- Numerous recent publications have documented that food from a global supermarket (dominated by a few corporate giants with considerable influence on governments) is troublesome, and that strengthening local food connections is a practical necessity.

Energy conservation- Fruit and vegetables sold at farmers markets or through community supported agriculture (CSA) programs generally travels between 5 and 50 miles before it is sold. In contrast, most fruit and vegetables sold in Midwestern supermarkets travel nearly 1,600 miles before the point of sale, entailing the use of significantly more energy for packaging, shipping, distributing, and retailing.

A new way of eating- Eating is an agricultural act, and also an ethical act. A growing number of people are interested in knowing how their food was grown, whether pesticides and antibiotics were used, and how the land was cared for. People are also interested in knowing who raised their food, whether the farmer received a living wage, and whether the working conditions of the people who processed the food are safe and just. Current food labels are silent about all of these questions. Consumers closer to their food source can find answers to these questions.

Adapted from materials published by the Center for Energy & Environmental Education, UNI, Cedar Falls, IA 50614; 319-273-2573.

Alphabetical Directory of Producers

A Taste of Country

Orr, Barb

PO Box 256; Brooklyn, IA 52211

641-522-7626, 641-990-4101, bfmjorrr@netins.net

Venues: direct marketing, Grinnell farmers market

Methods: organic methods, but not certified

Baked Goods

Fruits: rhubarb, strawberries

Vegetables: assortment

B & B Farms

Bahrenfuse, Robert (“Barney”), Suzanne Castello

15365 S. 12th Ave. E.; Grinnell, IA 50112

641-990-7843

Venues: direct marketing, wholesale: Café Phoenix

Methods: minimum chemical usage, free-range

Meats: beef, pork, lamb, goats

Poultry: chickens

Bahrenfuse, Robert, *see B&B Farms*

Barnes, Linda, *see High Hopes Gardens*

Brau, Ann

506 Montezuma St.; Malcom, IA 50157

641-990-6832, lbunham@iowatelecom.net

Venues: Compass Plant CSA, Grinnell farmers market

Methods: organic methods, but not certified

Eggs

Herbs

Vegetables: assortment

Brezina, Rudolph & Helen

1333 380th St.; Tama, IA 52339

641-498-7453

Venues: Grinnell, Marshalltown, and Toledo farmers markets

Methods: minimum chemical usage

Fruits: apples, berries, melons

Nuts

Vegetables: assortment

C & T Gardens

Kupka, Dawn

1894 290th St.; Melbourne, IA 50162

641-691-9710, moralhunter@yahoo.com

Venues: direct marketing, Toledo and Marshalltown farmers markets,

Methods: organic methods, but not certified, free-range

Baked Goods

Eggs

Fruits: apples

Herbs

Vegetables: assortment

Carroll's Pumpkin Farm

Carroll, Danny & Joy

244 400th Ave.; Grinnell, IA 50112

641-236-7043, fax: 641-236-7897; dcarroll@iowatelecom.net;

www.carrollspumpkinfarm.com

Venues: direct marketing

Methods: minimum chemical usage

Vegetables: pumpkins

Cashman Meats

Cashman, Pat

1757 530th Ave.; Deep River, IA 52222

641-623-2985, 319-480-3022, la_cashman@yahoo.com

Venues: direct marketing

Methods: antibiotic-free

Meat: purebred Berkshire pork

Deo Gloria Elk Products

Reitsma, Frank and Carmen

1125 Kent Ave.; New Sharon, IA 50207

641-637-2666, fax: 641-637-2666; fc_reitsma@yahoo.com

Venues: direct marketing, Des Moines farmers market, wholesale

Methods: organic methods, but not certified

Meats: elk

De Vilder, David & Margery, *see Sojourn Farm*

Doane, Bud, *see North Skunk Sawmill & Market, Inc.*

Dreesman Buffalo Ranch

Dreesman, Tom & Connie

3575 L. Ave.; Tama, IA 52339

641-484-6725, 319-330-9029, fax: 641-484-6725, dreesman@iowatelecom.net

Venues: direct marketing, Des Moines downtown and metro farmer's markets, wholesale

Methods: free-range

Meats: bison

Dunham, Andrew, *see Grinnell Heritage Farm*

Ebert Honey Co.

Ebert, Phil

14808 S. 102nd Ave. E.; Lynnville, IA 50153

641-527-2639, ehoney37@netins.net

Venues: direct marketing, Des Moines farmers market, wholesale

Honey: liquid, comb

Emmack Farms

Emmack, Delmar & Mary

7044 S. 60th Ave. W.; Colfax, IA 50054

515-994-2810

Venues: Prairie City, Newton and Des Moines farmers markets

Methods: minimum chemical usage

Vegetables: assortment (specialty: potatoes and popcorn)

Foreside Acres

Mitchell, Rick and Martha

162 380th Ave.; Grinnell, IA 50112

641-236-3580, fax: 641-236-3580; foreside@foresideacres.com;

www.foresideacres.com

Venues: direct marketing

Methods: organic methods, but not certified, free-range

Eggs

Fruits: melons

Herbs

Meats: lamb

Poultry: chickens, ducks, geese

Vegetables: assortment

Grinnell Heritage Farm, Inc.

Dunham, Andrew

1933 Penrose St.; Grinnell, IA 50112

641-236-4374, 641-990-5249, grinnellheritagefarm@gmail.com

Venues: Grinnell Heritage Farm CSA, Grinnell, Cedar Rapids, and
Des Moines farmers markets, wholesale

Methods: organic methods, but not certified, greenhouse

Herbs

Meats: beef

Vegetables: assortment

Haworth, Ron

5302 140th St.; Montezuma, IA 50171

641-623-2053, rhaworth@zumatel.net

Venues: direct marketing

Eggs

Meats: beef, lamb

Hempy, Robert & Frances

2952 D. Ave.; Montour, IA 50173

641-492-6252

Venues: Toledo and Garwin farmers markets

Methods: minimum chemical usage

Baked Goods

Fruits: apples, berries, grapes, melons, pears

Nuts

Vegetables: assortment

High Hopes Gardens

Runquist, Mark

Barnes, Linda

2860 Knapp Ave.; Melbourne, IA 50162

641-482-3185, fax: 641-482-3131

mark@highhopesgardens.com, www.highhopesgardens.com

Venues: direct marketing

Methods: organic methods, but not certified, free-range

Eggs

Meats: lamb, goat

Vegetables: assortment

Hinegardner Orchard

Hinegardner, David & Julie

1348 295th St.; Montour, IA 50173

641-492-6353, hinie@iowatelecom.net

Venues: direct marketing, u-pick, Grinnell and Marshalltown farmers markets,
wholesale

Fruits: apples, berries, melons, pears

Meats: beef

Soy Products

Vegetables: assortment (specialty: squash, gourds, pumpkins)

Hopkins Family Farm

Hopkins, Steve & Sara

7000 Clay St.; Newton, IA 50208

641-791-2740, andhop@pcpartner.net

Venues: direct marketing

Methods: organic methods, but not certified, free-range

Poultry: chickens

Humphrey Sweet Corn

Humphrey, Brad

11293 Hwy F 17 E.; Gilman, IA 50106

641-498-7317, sweetcornguy@hotmail.com; www.humphreysweetcorn.com

Venues: direct marketing, produce stands in Newton and in front of Loops
Movies and More in Grinnell; wholesale

Fruits: apples

Vegetables: sweet corn, tomatoes

Kupka, Dawn, see C & T Gardens

Landmark Farms

Jack and Barb Suiter

9038 Statton; Sully, IA 50251

641-594-3232, fax: 641-594-3232, landmarkfarms@netins.net

Venues: direct marketing, farmers markets, produce stand 3 miles west of
Sully on F62. wholesale

Methods: organic methods, but not certified, minimal chemical usage

Fruits: melons

Vegetables: assortment

Maytag Dairy Farms

2282 E. 8th St. North; Newton, IA 50208

641-792-1133, fax: 641-792-1567, mverploeg@iowatelecom.net

Venues: direct marketing, wholesale

Cheese: Blue Cheese

Mitchell, Rick and Martha, see Foreside Acres

North Skunk Sawmill and Market, Inc.

Doane, Bud

396 515th Ave.; Searsboro, IA 50242

641-593-6615, 641-990-4192, buddoane@northskunk.com, www.northskunk.com

Venues: CSA; direct marketing, Grinnell, Oskaloosa and Des Moines farmers markets

Methods: organic methods, but not certified, minimal chemical usage, greenhouse

Fruits: berries

Vegetables: assortment (specialty: tomatoes grown in greenhouse for extended season)

Orr, Barb, *see A Taste of Country*

Norton's Greenhouse

Norton, Don and Lori

700 W. Ross St.; Toledo, IA 52342

641-484-3995

Venues: wholesale

Methods: organic methods, but not certified, greenhouse

Fruits: apples, berries

Herbs: as plant starts

Vegetables: assortment; (specialty: fall cole crops)

Paul's Grains

Paul, Steven

2475B 340th St.; Laurel, IA 50141

641-476-3373, spaul@adiis.net, www.paulsgrains.com

Venues: CSA, direct marketing, Des Moines farmers market 2nd Saturday of May, June, July, and September. Des Moines' indoor market in November and December, Grinnell farmers market in September,

Methods: certified organic fields

Grains: barley, buckwheat, corn, oats, rye, soybeans, spelt, wheat,

Meats: beef

Reitsma, Frank and Carmen, *see Deo Gloria Elk Products*

Runquist, Mark, *see High Hopes Gardens*

Sojourn Farm

De Vilder, David & Margery
1535 345th Ave.; Brooklyn, IA 52211
641-522-9605, devilder@netins.net

Venues: Grinnell farmers market, wholesale

Methods: minimum chemical usage

Baked Goods

Fruits: apples, berries, cherries, grapes, melons, pears

Herbs

Vegetables: assortment (specialty: asparagus)

Squire Farm Produce

Squire, Herb & June
1519 Wallace Ave.; Marshalltown, IA 50158
641-474-2376, 641-750-2376

Venues: direct marketing, Des Moines, Grinnell, Marshalltown, and Toledo
farmers markets, wholesale

Methods: minimum chemical usage

Fruits: berries, melons

Herbs

Vegetables: assortment; (specialty: ornamental corn, gourds)

Suiter, Jack and Barb, *see Landmark Farms*

Upah's Pumpkin Patch

Upah, Dean & Marlys
3017 K Ave.; Toledo, IA 52342
641-484-5066, upahfamily@iowatelecom.net

Venues: direct marketing

Vegetables: specialty: pumpkins, squash, gourds, Indian corn

Werner, Chuck & Ginger

3456 T Ave.; Chelsea, IA 52215

641-489-2046

Venues: direct marketing, Toledo, and Grinnell farmers markets,

Methods: organic methods, but not certified, free-range

Baked Goods

Eggs

Fruits: apples, berries, melons,

Grains

Herbs

Nuts

Poultry: chickens, ducks, geese,

Vegetables: assortment

Directory of Producers by Product

Baked Goods

A Taste of Country	Brooklyn
C & T Gardens	Melbourne
Hempy, Robert & Frances	Montour
Sojourn Farm	Brooklyn
Werner, Chuck & Ginger	Chelsea

Cheese

Maytag Dairy Farms	Newton
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Eggs

Brau, Ann	Malcom
C & T Gardens	Toledo
Foreside Acres	Grinnell
Haworth, Ron	Montezuma
High Hopes Gardens	Melbourne
Werner, Chuck & Ginger	Chelsea

Fruits

A Taste of Country	Brooklyn
Rudolph & Helen Brezina	Tama
C & T Gardens	Melbourne
Foreside Acres	Grinnell
Hempy, Robert & Frances	Montour
High Hopes Gardens	Melbourne
Hinegardner Orchard	Montour
Humphrey Sweet Corn	Gilman
Landmark Farms	Sully
North Skunk Sawmill & Market	Searsboro
Norton's Greenhouse	Toledo
Sojourn Farm	Brooklyn
Squire Farm Produce	Marshalltown
Werner, Chuck & Ginger	Chelsea

Grains

Paul's Grains	Laurel
Werner, Chuck & Ginger	Chelsea

Herbs

Brau, Ann	Malcom
C & T Gardens	Melbourne
Foreside Acres	Grinnell
Grinnell Heritage Farm, Inc.	Grinnell
Norton's Greenhouse	Toledo
Sojourn Farm	Brooklyn
Squire Farm Produce	Marshalltown
Werner, Chuck & Ginger	Chelsea

Honey

Ebert Honey	Lynnville
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Meats

B & B Farms	Grinnell
Cashman Meats	Deep River
Deo Gloria Elk Products	New Sharon
Dreesman Buffalo Ranch	Tama
Foreside Acres	Grinnell
Grinnell Heritage Farm, Inc.	Grinnell
Haworth	Montezuma
High Hopes Gardens	Melbourne
Hinegardner Orchard	Montour
Paul's Grains	Laurel

Nuts

Rudolph & Helen Brezina	Tama
Hempy, Robert & Frances	Montour
Werner, Chuck & Ginger	Chelsea

Poultry

B & B Farms	Grinnell
Foreside Acres	Grinnell
Hopkins Family Farm	Newton
Werner, Chuck & Ginger	Chelsea

Soy Products

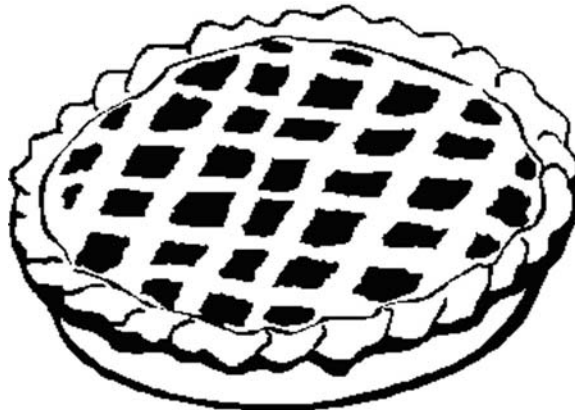
Hinegardner Orchard	Montour
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Vegetables

A Taste of Country	Brooklyn
Brau, Ann	Malcom
Brezina, Rudolph & Helen	Tama
C & T Gardens	Melbourne
Carroll's Pumpkin Farm	Grinnell
Dunham Farm	Grinnell
Emmack Farms	Colfax
Foreside Acres	Grinnell
Grinnell Heritage Farm, Inc.	Grinnell
Hempy, Robert & Frances	Montour
High Hopes Gardens	Melbourne
Hinegardner Orchard	Montour
Humphrey Sweet Corn	Gilman
Landmark Farms	Sully
North Skunk Sawmill & Market	Searsboro
Norton's Greenhouse	Toledo
Sojourn Farm	Brooklyn
Squire Farm Produce	Marshalltown
Upah's Pumpkin Patch	Toledo
Werner, Chuck & Ginger	Chelsea

Directory of Producers by City

Brooklyn	A Taste of Country Sojourn Farm	Marshalltown	Squire Farm Produce
Chelsea	Werner, Chuck & Ginger	Melbourne	C & T Gardens High Hopes Gardens
Colfax	Emmack Farms	Montezuma	Haworth, Ron
Deep River	Cashman Meats	Montour	Hempy, Robert & Frances Hinegardner Orchard
Gilman	Humphrey Sweet Corn	New Sharon	Deo Gloria Elk Products
Grinnell	B & B Farms Carroll's Pumpkin Farm Dunham Farm Foreside Acres Grinnell Heritage Farm, Inc.	Newton	Hopkins Family Farm Maytag Dairy Farms
Laurel	Paul's Grains	Searsboro	North Skunk Sawmill & Market
Lynnville	Ebert Honey Co.	Sully	Landmark Farms
Malcom	Brau, Ann	Tama	Brezina, Rudolph & Helen Dreesman Buffalo Ranch
		Toledo	Norton's Greenhouse Upah's Pumpkin Patch



Comparison of Local versus Conventional Source Food Miles (WASDs) for Produce

There is a striking difference between the distances that foods from conventional sources and locally grown foods travel to our table. To obtain the average food miles a certain food item travels via all sources to reach a certain city or community, it is necessary to calculate a Weighted Average Source Distance (WASD) food mile. This distance estimate combines information on the distances from producers to consumers and amount of food product transported.

Produce Type	Locally Grown Food Miles	Conventional Source Food Miles
Apples	61	1,726
Beans	65	1,313
Broccoli	20	1,846
Cabbage	50	719
Carrots	27	1,838
Corn, Sweet	20	1,426
Garlic	31	1,811
Lettuce	43	1,823
Onions	35	1,759
Peppers	44	1,589
Potatoes	75	1,155
Pumpkins	41	311
Spinach	36	1,815
Squash	52	1,277
Strawberries	56	1,830
Tomatoes	60	1,569
WASD - for all produce	56	1,494
Sum of all WASDs	716	25,301

Source: Food Miles: A Simple Metaphor to Contrast Local and Global Food Systems By Rich Pirog, Marketing and Food Systems Research Program Leader, Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, Ames, Iowa

Directory of Regional Farmers markets

Grinnell

- Thursdays 3:00–6:00 pm and Saturdays 10:00 am–noon
- Thursdays: May 22 – Oct. 9; Saturdays: May 24 – Oct. 1
- On 4th Avenue between Broad Street and Park Street
- Jean Jones at Chamber of Commerce 641-236-6555

Knoxville

- Tuesdays 12:00-5:00 pm; Saturdays 8:00 am–noon
- May 24 – Oct. 11
- west side of Town Square
- Maxine Chambers 641-943-2223

Marshalltown

- Wednesdays 4:00–6:00 pm and Saturdays 8:00–11:00 am
- May 14 to mid-October
- N. 2nd Ave. just north of East State Street under pavilion
- Margaret Hala 641-752-2981

Newton

- Tuesdays 4:00 – 7:00 pm
- June 1 – Oct. 7
- 200 block North 5th Avenue West
- Diane Martinson 641-792-9193

Oskaloosa

- Tuesdays 4:00–6:00 pm; Saturdays 8:00–11:00 am
- May 27 – October 18
- Tuesday market: east side of Town Square
- Saturday market: Hy-Vee parking lot on South D Street
- Lyle Siefering 641-673-6683
- ruritan@hawkeye-re.com; www.hawkeye-re.com/farmersmarket/

Pella

- Thursdays 3:00–6:00 pm
- May 22 – late October
- First Reformed Church parking lot at 603 Broadway
- Vivian Rippentrop 641-628-5314

Toledo

- Fridays at 5:00 pm–7:00 pm
- early May to late October
- east side of Courthouse
- Dawn Kupka 641-691-9710

Traer

- Wednesdays at 4:00 pm–6:00 pm
- early May through October
- Farmers Savings Bank parking lot at corner of 63 and Hwy 8
- Marlys Svoboda 319-479-2279

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Organizations:

- **Compass Plant CSA:** serves the immediate Grinnell area, provides a weekly share of locally grown fresh produce and eggs to members. Contact Ann Brau at (641) 990-6832 or lbdunham@iowatelecom.net for information.
- **Grinnell Heritage Farms CSA:** serves the Grinnell, Cedar Rapids, and Iowa City areas, provides a weekly share of locally grown fresh produce to members. Contact Andrew Dunham at 641-236-4374, 641-990-5249, or grinnellheritagefarm@gmail.com for information.

Farmers' markets not only are a great place to get fresh produce, flowers and baked goods, they also generate an estimated \$20.8 million in sales and more than 325 jobs for the Iowa economy.

In 2004, Iowa had around 160 farmers' markets, the highest per capita in the nation. At least 55,000 people went to at least one farmers market, and total seasonal attendance was estimated at 135,000.

Source: Leopold Center, Iowa State

Farming in East-Central Iowa Then and Now

-Jonathan Andelson

“There is no better soil anywhere than the soil of this county,” wrote the author of an 1865 promotional tract about Poweshiek County.¹ Such boosterism was common in the nineteenth century as land speculators exaggerated the virtues of a place in an effort to promote its settlement. In point of fact, although the soil of Poweshiek County was excellent, so were most of the soils of east-central Iowa. Their fertility has been the foundation for agricultural productivity in the region for millennia.

Native Americans began farming in the region about 4,000 years ago during the late Archaic period. They favored the wooded areas adjacent to rivers and streams where the soil was easier to work. By 1000 A.D. they were cultivating several varieties of corn, edible beans, squash, pumpkins, tobacco, common sunflower, bottle gourd, marsh elder, little barley, watermelon, and reed canary grass. Native peoples also hunted game and gathered a variety of wild plants for both culinary and medicinal purposes from the open prairies as well as the woodlands. Among others they used white prairie clover, wild onion, Jerusalem artichoke, and prairie turnip as foods, while various tribes used rattlesnake master for bladder trouble, butterfly milkweed for bronchial ailments, and great lobelia as love medicine.

Some of the first Europeans to visit Iowa, accustomed to a denser and more continuous forest environment, believed that the absence of trees on the prairie indicated an infertile soil. The early settlers soon realized the truth and, with the aid of the self-scouring steel mold-board plow, developed in 1837 by John Deere, they broke the prairie and began producing a rich harvest of crops. For the most part they ignored the native cultigens in favor of their own. Wheat, oats, flax, barley, and rye all grew well in the area and appear on early crop lists of every county in east-central Iowa. They also generally preferred European fruits and vegetables.

One native crop, however, corn (much modified from the aboriginal varieties) quickly came to dominate production for market. Already in 1856 Iowa farmers planted 737,000 acres of corn compared to 388,000 acres of wheat and 190,000 acres of oats. That year 31 million bushels came off Iowa corn fields, ten percent more than the corn harvest in New York and the six New England states combined, though Iowa had only one-tenth of the population. Ten years later, the yield had nearly doubled to 58 million bushels, and in 1876 it stood at 177 million bushels. Nearly all of the increase came from farmers planting more of their land to corn rather than from higher per acre yields, which statewide ranged between 30 and 50 bushels per acre until the 1940s. In 1866, Iowa farmers harvested 1.8 million acres of corn; in 1876, the figure was 5.2 million, roughly a three-fold increase. In 1886, the harvest was 230 million bushels from nearly 8 million acres.

Corn became the leading field crop in the counties around Grinnell as well. Driven by higher yields than the statewide average, by 1879 the corn acreage in Poweshiek, Jasper, Marshall, Mahaska, and Tama Counties was one and one half times the acreage planted all to other grains combined. A cautionary note about this trend was sounded that year by L.G.C. Pierce in his presidential address to members of the Poweshiek County Central Agricultural Society: "To the farmers I would say,

don't concentrate too much on one kind of grain. Corn is king, but don't worship too much at his shrine to the neglect of other grains and grasses. It has become an established fact that corn too long continued after corn will not prove a success; there are too many enemies in the field."²

Despite Pierce's concern, farming in east-central Iowa in the 1870s and '80s could still be described as diversified. In addition to the various grains, farmers raised potatoes, buckwheat, peas and beans, sorghum for molasses, and broomcorn as well as timothy, clover, and Hungarian (or smooth) brome for hay, all on a commercial basis. Many kinds of fruits added to the diversity. Apples thrived in the region. Pears grew less well, but they were raised for market in all the counties, as were currants, strawberries, gooseberries, raspberries, cherries, and grapes. Early settlers also raised a medley of garden vegetables, mostly for their own use. Beans, beets, cabbage, carrots, cucumbers, gourds, kohlrabi, lettuce, onions, parsnips, peas, peppers, pumpkins, radishes, squash, tomatoes, and turnips added nutrition, color and flavor to their meals.

The other main element in Iowa agriculture was animal husbandry, and in east-central Iowa livestock played an important role from the first. By 1880, Poweshiek, Marshall, Mahaska, Tama, and Jasper Counties held a total of roughly 539,000 swine, 142,000 beef cattle, 62,000 milk cows, and 34,800 sheep. (Mahaska County had led the state in sheep shorn in 1867 and was third in 1880.) Approximately 63,000 horses in the five counties provided service as draft animals and for transportation in 1880.

In the twentieth century, Iowa agriculture grew increasingly specialized. Increasing mechanization, the development of hybrid corn, the introduction of the soybean, the replacement of horsepower by tractor power, and heavy use of

pesticides, herbicides, and synthetic fertilizers revolutionized farming in Iowa and elsewhere, especially after mid-century. Wheat, barley, sorghum, rye, flax, potatoes, edible beans, buckwheat, broomcorn, pears, and small fruits all gradually disappeared as commercial crops as farmers specialized in corn and soybeans. In 2001, Iowa farms produced an incredible 1.74 billion bushels of corn, 459 million bushels of soybeans, 15.4 million hogs, 3.65 million cattle and calves, 37.8 million chickens, and 7.55 billion eggs.³ The counties of east-central Iowa show a similar degree of specialization. Over 99 percent of the cropland in these counties is planted in corn and soybeans. Similarly, hogs and beef cattle account for 99 percent of the non-poultry livestock raised.

Regional specialization characterizes nearly all of American agriculture today. A concomitant is, of course, regional interdependence, which implies a tremendous increase in the distances that food travels before reaching our tables compared to a century ago. A recent report issued by the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University cites estimates that 90 percent or more of the food Iowans consume today is raised out of state (although it cautions that, in the absence of detailed evidence, such estimates should be considered tentative). It can be added that much of the fruit and even some of the beef we eat was produced in other countries. The converse is obviously also true: “Most Iowa farms no longer produce food to supply Iowa consumers directly.”⁴

Not only is more of our food shipped longer distances, more of it arrives in our homes already processed – pre-cooked, canned, frozen, packaged, or with an assortment of extra ingredients added to provide color, flavor, and longer shelf life. The same is true of most of the food Americans consume away from home, and we

are eating out more than ever, especially at “fast food” restaurants. According to Eric Schlosser, author of *Fast Food Nation*, “In 1970, Americans spent about \$6 billion on fast food; in 2001, they spent more than \$110 billion. Americans now spend more money on fast food than on higher education, personal computers, computer software, or new cars. They spend more on fast food than on movies, books, magazines, newspapers, videos, and recorded music – combined.”⁵

The distance our food travels, the amount of processing much of it gets before it reaches us, and our recent penchant for fast food all suggest a growing separation between the production and consumption of food. In his recent book, *Coming Home To Eat*, Gary Paul Nabhan wrote, “One fact from our time is so blatantly obvious that even to repeat it is to pretend that it is not immediately self-evident. More people than ever before in history have absolutely no involvement in producing the foods that sustain them.”⁶ When he says “no involvement,” Nabhan does not simply mean that most people no longer farm, but that most people no longer even relate to the production of food. It is a gulf measured not only by the distance food travels, but by the lack of knowledge on the part of most consumers about where their food comes from and how it is produced and processed, and also in the absence of a social relationship between the food consumer and the food producer.

Farmers in east-central Iowa, and farmers around the country, have traded diversified farming and a greater degree of regional self-sufficiency for the higher productivity -- though not necessarily higher prices -- that come from monocultures. Whether this trend proves economically and environmentally sustainable in the long run depends on many unforeseeable factors. The economic difficulties facing farmers in recent years, coupled with dependence on petroleum-fueled machinery

and transport, and growing environmental concerns about chemical usage and soil erosion, suggest that alternatives to specialization should again be considered. What has been called the “local foods movement” is one alternative that is being explored. This directory is intended to assist individuals and institutions in the Grinnell area investigate the possibilities and pleasures of locally grown food.

Endnotes

1 Anonymous, *Poweshiek County, Iowa: A Descriptive Account of Its Climate, Soil, Productions, Surface, Water, Prairie, Timber, Schools, Churches, and Occupations of Its People*. Montezuma, Iowa: W.C. Condit, Printer. 1865.

2 Report of the Secretary of the Iowa State Agricultural Society for the Year 1879. Des Moines, Iowa: F.M. Mills, State Printer. 1880.

3 Iowa Agricultural Statistics. Iowa Department of Agriculture.
www.agriculture.state.ia.us (June 2002).

4 Rich Pirog, Timothy Van Pelt, Kamyar Enshayan, and Ellen Cook, *Food, Fuel, and Freeways: An Iowa Perspective on How Far Food Travels, Fuel Usage, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions*. Ames, Iowa: Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture. June 2001. <http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/>

5 Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers. 2002.

6 Gary Paul Nabhan, *Coming Home To Eat*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company. 2002

Seasonal Availability

	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
<u>FRUIT</u>							
Apples				◆	◆	◆	◆
Blueberries			◆	◆			
Elderberries				◆	◆		
Gooseberries			◆				
Melons					◆	◆	
Raspberries			◆	◆			
Strawberries			◆				
<u>VEGETABLES</u>							
Asparagus		◆					
Beets			◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Broccoli				◆	◆		
Carrots				◆	◆	◆	◆
Cauliflower			◆	◆			
Cucumbers				◆	◆	◆	
Eggplant				◆	◆	◆	
Garlic			◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Green Beans			◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Leek					◆	◆	◆
Lettuce		◆	◆			◆	◆
Onions			◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Peas			◆	◆		◆	◆
Peppers				◆	◆	◆	
Potatoes				◆	◆	◆	◆
Radishes		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Rhubarb	◆						
Soybeans					◆	◆	◆
Spinach		◆					◆
Summer Squash (Zucchini)				◆	◆	◆	◆
Sweet Corn					◆	◆	
Tomatoes				◆	◆	◆	◆
Winter Squash						◆	◆

