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Mark J. Braun, EdD, Executive Director

December 10, 2021

Governor Kim Reynolds  
Office of the Governor  
1007 East Grand Ave.  
Des Moines, IA 50319

Mr. Charlie Smithson  
Secretary of the Senate  
State Capitol Building  
Des Moines IA 50319

Ms. Meghan Nelson  
Chief Clerk of the House  
State Capitol Building  
Des Moines IA 50319

Re: Farm to Table Task Force Report

Dear Governor Reynolds and Members of the Iowa General Assembly:

Pursuant to the 2021 Senate File 578 §22(5), attached is the Farm to Table Task Force report prepared jointly by the Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig and Iowa State University's Extension and Outreach VP, John Lawrence.

If you have any questions or need more information, please don't hesitate to contact this office.

Sincerely,

Mark J. Braun

\\Box Sync\Board of Regents Shared\BF\Legislative\2022\Reports\

Attachments

cc: Brendan Beeter  
Legislative Liaisons  
Legislative Log



December 10, 2021

Members of the General Assembly,

Please find attached the Farm to Table Task Force Report that was requested by the Legislature as part of Senate File 578.

We want to thank you all for giving us the privilege of leading the Farm to Table Task Force. The fact that the Legislature has shown an interest in the topic of local foods is great news because it is something that many partners around the state are incredibly passionate about. Locally grown and produced food stimulates our economy and our local communities and provides consumers with additional choices.

Over the last several months, our team has been busy at work, assembling a task force of local food and procurement experts to identify the biggest barriers and strengths within the state related to production practices, processing, and large purchasers acquiring local foods. In the attached report, you will find detailed findings as well as strategies to address the challenges that were identified as well as leveraging our state's strengths. However, we know that these recommendations are not a silver bullet. There remain many unsolved challenges that will require additional research, collaboration, and work in the years ahead.

Overall, this report provides tangible recommendations and strategies to move our Iowa food system forward in a significant way.

Finally, the two of us would like to thank the task force members for providing their expertise, time, and passion in researching this topic and developing this report. Also, a special thanks to Colin Tadlock and Courtney Long for their tireless efforts in capturing the discussion and distilling it into this report.

If we can provide any additional information or answer questions you may have, please don't hesitate to contact us. You can also reach out to Colin (515-518-7609) or Courtney (515-460-3227).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Naig". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Mike Naig  
Secretary of Agriculture

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John D. Lawrence". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

John D. Lawrence  
Vice President  
Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

# Farm to Table Taskforce Recommendations

## Executive Summary

The Farm to Table Task Force began convening in September 2021 based on a legislative charge to “recommend how institutional purchasers, including schools, may be provided with long-term practical options to routinely acquire fresh food derived from locally or regionally produced and processed farm commodities, including meat, poultry, fish, and dairy products; eggs; vegetables; fruits; nuts; and honey.” Further, the task force was directed to consider methods to improve direct farmer to consumer transactions and better integrate existing public and private procurement programs, including the Farm-to-School program at Iowa Department of Land Stewardship, the Local Food and Farm Program (LFFP) at Iowa State University, the Farm to Food Donation tax credit, and the Iowa emergency food purchase program.

Nationally, for more than two decades, there has been growing interest and consumer demand for local foods. Over the last 18 months, this trend has grown significantly, in part because of COVID. Supply chain challenges and interest in supporting local businesses have contributed to this trend. However, Iowa farmers experience constraints in scaling-up and meeting institutional buyer demands. A study in 2015 showed that Iowa’s horticulture farmers are new to this type of production, and of these new farmers growing horticulture food crops, they are growing on less acres than previous farmers with a median farm size of 2 acres.

According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, Iowa has 2,575 farms selling food direct to consumers. The same Census indicates only 558 farms selling directly to retail markets, institutions, and food hubs for local or regionally branded products. In Iowa, there has been a slight shift to wholesale only distribution. Utilization of direct-to-consumer markets dropped from 64% in 2000 to 54% in 2015, utilization of both direct-to-consumer and wholesale markets has remained steady at 27%, and wholesale outlet only increased from 9% in 2000 to 19% of typical market sales in 2015 (Enderton, Bregendahl, Swenson, & Adcock, 2017). Despite doubling the sales, only one in five of these farmers sold to someone other than direct to consumer.

Throughout this process, anecdotes were shared regarding the benefits of buying from Iowa producers, including boosting the local economy, supporting community-based businesses, lessening dependence on our national and global distribution systems, and providing Iowans with fresh and healthy food. State institutions such as schools which purchase local foods leverage their tax dollars because more of those dollars stays and turns over in the local economy. A specific example of this impact is the Local Produce and Protein Program in 2020 which provided \$603,000 to Iowa farms, food hubs, schools, and early care sites. This program showcases the demand and potential for increasing local food procurement in our state.

*The task force is incredibly appreciative that the Legislature has shown an interest in local foods and views our farm to table efforts as a priority. A summary of the recommendation follows. Next, we review our process and provide more details on each recommendation including a proposed timeline and whether funding or legislation is needed. We look forward to working collaboratively on these recommendations in the future and the upcoming session.*

## Summary of Recommendations

1. Improve sales of local foods to institutions, including farm to school and early care efforts, by increasing the efficiency of local food distribution and awareness of local options for institutional buyers.
  - Research and determine best practices for supply and demand, scale, etc.
  - Continue Local Produce and Protein Program funds
  - Encourage the use of regional aggregators and food hubs
  - Implement *Choose Iowa* state branding and marketing
  - Provide additional technical assistance on food procurement
2. Develop and support expanded processing opportunities for local foods
  - Research and determine best practices in other states
  - Provide additional technical assistance for startups
3. Research and increase support for local food farming and scaling up local food agriculture
  - Assess and understand risk associated with local food production
  - Research ways to scale up production and processing of high-demand products
4. Revitalize and expand the Local Food and Farm Advisory Council
  - Broaden and revitalize the Council
  - Provide Council with tools
5. Increase usage of the Farm to Food Donation Tax Credit
  - Improve internal process
  - Build awareness and improve use of program
  - Explore best practices and innovative food donation programs

## Process

The task force (Appendix A) was led by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach (ISUEO) and included twelve experts across the local food supply chain representing farmers, food distributors, businesses, and food banks. There are numerous food systems organizations, working groups and coalitions that exist across the state of Iowa, many of which the task force members support. For further information on a glossary of terms and acronyms, food system diagram, and helpful links for further information, please see Appendix B-D.

The task force met three times throughout the fall of 2021, of which public comment was allowed at the end of each session. Staff from IDALS and ISUEO also connected with additional partners across the state to listen and understand challenges, successes, and potential recommendations for our local and regional food system.

The task force process included an initial meeting for task force members to learn about the work across the state, existing legislation, and programs that IDALS and ISUEO offer, and sharing about programming areas and projects from each respective task force member. The second meeting was a facilitated process to confirm strengths, challenges, and recommendations across the food system (ranging from production, processing, distribution, consumption, and resource management). Areas of interest were shared based on interviews and focus groups (occurred in tandem to the task force in a separate Iowa Food System Coalition project). Discussion occurred to add and clarify and task force members voted to prioritize the most critical strengths, challenges, and recommendations to pursue (Appendix E). The third meeting then led to a discussion on more specific objectives, including how each recommendation could occur, when it could be accomplished, potential partners, and funding needs.

The following report describes each recommendation and the specific aspects based on task force deliberation. Each section reviews the purpose of the recommendation, the challenge it will help resolve, and the ways to link and leverage existing capacities across the state. Proposed timelines and funding are shared where appropriate. While this work has just begun, we believe we have accomplished a significant task to understand our existing landscape and explore specific next steps to support the sustainability and economic conditions of our local and regional farmers and food businesses. While some are actionable items, the task force emphasizes that it did not find solutions to every challenge.

## **Recommendation 1: Improve sales of local foods to institutions, including farm to school and early care efforts, by increasing the efficiency of local food distribution and awareness of local options for institutional buyers.**

Iowa has a rich history of farming traditional crops but is lacking in medium to large scale specialty crop operations. This creates a constraint for sourcing local and meeting demand of larger distributors and institutional purchasers interested in sourcing local. Iowa has strong examples of direct-to-consumer relationships, but there are issues with consistent supply and volume when scaling up to meet the needs of an institutional buyer, grocer, or large-scale buyer.

There are various business models that serve as an aggregator and distributor for global, national, and local foods, including broadline distributors such as Martin Brothers, Sysco, Loffredo, and Food Hubs. Produce auctions have also served one aggregation space and provide regional capacity for local food sales. Food hubs are a younger business model that serve as both the aggregator and distributor of local foods, many also sell a variety of products from meat, produce, dairy and specialty crops. The Food Hub Managers Working Group (FHMWG) started in 2015 to support food hubs in their efforts to understand the complexities of the food system and improve distribution efficiencies. While food hubs are an evolving business model, and can support farmers on transportation efficiencies and sales, there are still financial struggles. Greater commitment to growing out this business model would support our Iowa food system.

Institutional buyers include early care, schools, colleges and universities, hospitals, cafeterias, nursing homes, assisted living centers, summer camps, and broadline food providers. They often are price conscious or operate within state or federal purchasing guidelines. While some institutions serve meals year-round, most K-12 schools, colleges and universities do not operate during the summer. The kitchen capacity and labor availability may limit the buyer's ability to store, or process produce on site. Finally, because local food production currently has limited scale to service this market, many institutional buyers are simply unable to purchase in an effective manner or may not be familiar with how to buy and serve locally grown fruits, vegetables, meat, and dairy products.

Despite the challenges, producing and processing food locally for institutional buyers creates jobs and economic activity in rural communities and diversifies the supply chain for buyers. According to the [Local Produce and Protein Impact Report](#), 53 of Iowa's 99 counties participated and a total \$603,000 was spent in support of producer equipment, school kitchen equipment and local food procurement in schools and early care sites. This October, a [supplemental report](#) was published by ISUEO and shows that when these incentives were not available, local food purchases dropped significantly.

This recommendation and steps would increase capacity for farmers, aggregators, and food hubs to sell to institutions. This is an intersectional goal that reaches across the food value chain from production opportunities, aggregation and distribution, and end consumers within our early care and schools as well as additional large institutions such as nursing homes, hospitals and broadline distributors.

### **Best Practices and Research**

There have been numerous projects that research and assess individual food hub management and business operations, as well as grants that have supported increasing farm to school purchasing and developing curricula for farms, schools, and institutions. However, the task force believes that additional applied analysis into the supply and demand of our local foods is necessary to ensure that existing farms, food hubs, and local food buyers are better

informed of market conditions and can make economically sound decisions to remain viable. Applied research would help practitioners and businesses understand specific ways to scale up capacity to meet the needs of institutions and larger distributors, including limitations and risks associated with scaling up to meet demand of institutional buyers. This actionable research could also provide producers and aggregators with additional data and specific practices regarding product and packing size, timing, and specs of localized institutional demand. Similarly, buyers will be informed on ways to source locally grown options and ways of working with food producers and food hubs.

### **Incentives and Financing**

Increasing scale and production of local foods requires additional **capacity and infrastructure for storage, distribution, and aggregation logistics**. For example, improved coordination between farmers, food hubs, and "nodes" that support storage and aggregation between larger hubs will increase efficiency of the marketing system.

It would be beneficial to have **consistent and predictable incentives that support increased purchases from institutions** of local foods as a regular practice rather than a "special occasion". Predictability allows producers and buyers to plan and invest with confidence. Strategies could include evolving the incentive programs for institutional buyers to purchase local foods or creating local buying campaigns like "[Kentucky Proud Buy Local](#)" and "[North Carolina 10%](#)" which offer a range of opportunities from individuals, restaurants and retailers, and large scale buyers to buy local (see Choose Iowa).

- **Continue Local Produce and Protein Program funds.** In 2020, IDALS utilized CARES Act funding to create the Local Produce and Protein Program that **reimbursed schools, day cares, and higher education institutions** for purchasing local foods on a matching basis. The program was well-utilized and should be continued in the future to reduce costs for institutions and foster relationships between local suppliers and buyers. A fund currently exists within IDALS' Farm to School program that could be used as a vehicle for K-12 schools, though no funds are currently available. Different funding options can be considered including ARPA funds, federal or private grants, or appropriations from the Legislature.
- **Encourage the use of regional aggregators and food hubs.** Increased usage will help reduce the fixed costs per unit of food delivered and increase efficiency. Improving the aggregation and distribution efficiency of the marketing system will lower costs to buyers and increase demand for local producers, stimulating economic activity.
- **Choose Iowa promotional program and grants.** The recently launched Choose Iowa Marketing and Promotion program provides matching grants for up to \$25,000, which can be used for food hub development. Grant funds are limited and are in high demand, so additional funds are recommended to be appropriated by the Legislature. Additionally, launching a Choose Iowa state branding and promotional campaign would help connect institutional buyers with additional farmers or local food wholesalers in a more convenient way. A campaign can provide awareness to the community at large and provide common language around local foods.

### **Technical Assistance:**

Providing consultants familiar with meal planning and local food procurement can help to assist and train early care, K-12 schools, and other institutional buyers on how to effectively utilize local foods. Additional opportunities to support this goal include consultants that can train one-on-one with food hub managers, farmers looking to increase capacity and size, and institutional procurement coaches such as the [Cafeteria Coaching](#) program that ISUEO provides.

**Who supports the work:** IDALS, ISUEO, Food Hub Managers Working Group (FHMWG), Department of Education (DOE), Farm to School and Early Care Coalition (F2SEC)

**Timeline:**

- **Short term (up to 1 year):** Consider ARPA request for incentives and consulting; seek out legislative funding related to analysis and incentives; begin collaboration and planning discussions for expanding Local Food Day and promotional events for more frequency throughout the year; highlight and build awareness of local food procurement kits; Choose Iowa program; consultant at DOE
- **Intermediate (1 to 3 years):** Continue to investigate and fund incentivizes for sales of local foods; share about findings from market analysis and geographic preference research; promote Choose Iowa Grants.
- **Long term (over 3 years):** Encourage institutions and schools to create annual local food procurement plans with progressive goals, which may incorporate a geographic preference in their bid and solicitation.

**Funding required?** Yes

**Legislation required?** Yes



## Recommendation 2: Develop and support expanded processing opportunities for local foods

One of the biggest challenges identified by the task force and referenced frequently in stakeholder feedback is the lack of processing capacity across the state. Regardless of what food product is being processed, whether its meat, dairy, fruits, or vegetables, establishing these types of facilities is an expensive and complex endeavor. Additionally, there are constraints to accessing licensed kitchens to repackage or process fresh fruits and vegetables or breakdown an animal after being butchered. This gap in infrastructure impacts both our local food supply chain and ability to develop value-added product as well our emergency food supply chain and donations through programs like Pass the Pork and Beef Up Iowa.

### Best Practices and Research

While somewhat connected to Recommendation #1, this goal is more intentional to support value-added product development and encourage additional processing capacity, including research on developing a fruit and vegetable processor. This will need to include processing education and research on best practices and case studies from across the country, including assessment of small to medium scale facilities (under \$5 million) that can provide a space for aggregating and processing raw product that can then be developed into both direct-to-consumer or individual servings as well as larger scale quantities for buyers such as schools.

### Technical Assistance

Individuals interested in pursuing a processing business will benefit from a resource that provides technical assistance. This type of assistance could include support on the technical aspects of starting a processing business, product development, business planning, understanding risk, labeling requirements, food safety, etc. IDALS and ISUEO will work to identify the best entity or partnerships to offer this type of service.

### Infrastructure

In addition, there is clear need for increased infrastructure, bricks and mortar or mobile, that can support processing of various products. One potential is developing a food enterprise or agriculture innovation center that provides comprehensive service for product development, recipe testing, business support and assistance, and angel investing. Several examples exist across the nation that could serve as case studies for this type of model in Iowa, including [The Food Building](#), [The Food Processing Center](#), and [Food Enterprise Center of Viroqua](#).

This is a long-term project that could start with initial research and evolve into consulting, which then leads to a built site (or multiple) that can support additional needs of storage and logistics (or a node) which could help achieve goals references in Recommendation #1.

**Who supports the work:** IDALS and ISUEO; possibly DIA, IEDA, SBDC

### Timeline:

- **Short term (up to 1 year):** Apply for grants or other funding mechanisms to support research on best practices and technical assistance support; review existing publications on agriculture innovation centers
- **Intermediate term (1-3 years):** Research processing and packaging needs in institutional sales, donation, and food businesses
- **Long-term (over 3 years):** Build and develop a comprehensive processing and innovation facility

**Funding required?** Yes

**Legislation required?** No

## **Recommendation 3: Research and increase support for local food farming and scaling up local food agriculture**

Improving capacity for farmers to increase sales of local foods is a long-term investment that requires both market support like Recommendations #1 and #2, as well as additional farm business support for handling and managing risk. Risk management may include business plan development, financial management, crop or revenue insurance, legal and insurance services, increasing markets, and general increase in scale to ensure that our Iowa production of local products continues to serve both individual and large-scale buyers. Additional challenges that face our farmers are land access and lenders and agencies knowledgeable of local food production. A commitment to scaling up local agriculture to meet institutional needs is another important step necessary in Iowa. If farms can scale up and provide consistent supply, it can also support cultivating consistent demand from food buyers at the institutional level. To scale up, it will require that farmers access capital, land, and infrastructure development opportunities. Because the acreage required for local food production is small, the existing Beginning Farmer tax credit program is often a small incentive for the landowners to participate.

### **Scaling Up Agriculture**

The task force shared several hurdles that small scale specialty crop and local, niche producers face in determining their ability to scale up to meet additional market demands. Within Iowa, we have a limited number of producers that are between a small-scale, direct to consumer model, and the large-scale commodity crop farm. Therefore, the task force recommends additional research to assess what it would look like to support increasing scale of farms to meet capacity to sell at bulk and wholesale to institutions. Findings from this research can support future actionable projects to increase scale of our farms to meet local product demand in institutional procurement settings.

### **Understanding Risk**

The lack of meaningful insurance products for specialty crops is a significant hurdle for existing farmers and for those considering starting farming or scaling up. Further research is needed to understand the impact that this causes on farms and food businesses. Reviewing existing crop insurance policies both within Iowa and case studies in other states could support creating a new insurance product for specialty crops with the USDA Risk Management Agency. This assessment needs to include reviewing specific crops and potential coverage. Iowa does not have adequate data on yield or pricing to develop effective insurance products for specialty crops. For example, insurance coverage for one black bean farmer in Iowa needed to use Idaho prices to determine insured loss. There are additional steps that need to occur to ensure that Iowa specialty crop farmers have access to insurance and other risk management practices.

Food safety certification for specialty crops is another hurdle. GAP certification is required for larger institutional markets and distributors. Certification can range from \$400-1000 annually. Offering a cost-share program (like organic certification) would make certification achievable for small farms.

Additionally, it will be critical to understand local product production potential in Iowa and the consumer demand or market potential. This will include financial considerations for scaling up farm operations to meet those product options and market demands. It also includes understanding which high margin crops are suitable for both producers and markets.

**Who supports the work:** IDALS and ISUEO; suggested: Practical Farmers of Iowa, and Iowa Fruit and Vegetable Growers

**Timeline:**

- **Short term (up to 1 year):** Conduct practical research on risk and supply and institutional demand
- **Intermediate term (1 to 3 years):** Increase scale of agriculture and number of farms selling to institutions
- **Long term (over 3 years):** Unknown

**Funding required?** Potentially

**Legislation required?** No

## **Recommendation 4: Revitalize and Expand the Local Food and Farm Council**

Over the last 18 months, consumer demand and interest in local foods has grown significantly. Supply chain challenges and interest in supporting local businesses have contributed to this trend. Buying from Iowa producers has several benefits to the state, including boosting the local economy, supporting community businesses, lessening dependence on complex supply chains and providing Iowans with fresh and healthy food.

To ensure that momentum and the benefits of local foods are not lost, task force members strongly support continuing the work of the task force to further the research and implement the recommendations in this report. Rather than continuing this task force or creating another separate committee, it is recommended that the existing Local Food and Farm Program (LFFP) Council, created in 2011, is revitalized to both continue existing programming and support the momentum from the task force discussions and recommendations.

Because this legislation is a critical piece of this work, it is suggested that a refresh of the Council occurs. In recent years the LFFP Council has met relatively infrequently and there are opportunities to utilize this council as a sounding board and guide for allocated funding. The Council is an existing effort of the state to support local foods and can continue the efforts of the task force by evolving its scope. In addition, the Council could also collaborate with the ongoing work from the Iowa Food System Coalition, mentioned in the introduction, that is seeking to develop an Iowa Food System plan in 2022.

### **Broaden and Revitalize the Council**

To continue making progress and expand markets for Iowa farmers, the task force recommends that the Local Food and Farm Program Council's charge be updated, and membership broadened to include more of the local food supply chain as well as external actors that support the work. This would provide a holistic view of the industry and enable greater diversity in scale and participation within the local food system. The Council would continue to help guide local food efforts and be led by IDALS and ISUEO. Suggestions for a new council makeup could include:

- Livestock, dairy, fruit, and vegetable farmers
- Meat, dairy, fruit, or vegetables processors
- Small to large scale distributor of local foods
- Small to large scale grocer
- Food service providers at K-12 schools or early care centers
- Institutional procurers outside schools
- A member from each of the local foods work groups: Regional Food System Working Group, Farm to School and Early Care Coalition, Food Hub Managers Working Group, and Iowa Food System Coalition
- Other government entities who play a role in local foods or nutrition programs (DOE, FSA, DHS, DPH, etc.)
- Lender
- Insurance Agency

Revitalizing and expanding the LFFP Council will assist in providing direction and discussion on food system needs and goals for the State of Iowa.

## **Provide the Council with Tools**

The LFFP Council has been in existence since 2011 and much has changed in the local food scene over the course of a decade. Significant progress has been made in several ways to build out and develop Iowa's local food system, but additional planning and work remains.

In addition to existing appropriations, the task force recommends that the Legislature appropriate additional funding and/or establish a voluntary funding mechanism to the LFFP to administer a mini-grant program to research food system needs and fund pilot/demonstration projects that could be replicated statewide.

**Who supports the work:** IDALS and ISUEO

### **Timeline:**

- **Short term (up to 1 year):** Update council charge and membership; change statute to shift appointment authority to the Secretary of Agriculture; increase meeting time of Council to 2-4 times per year.
- **Intermediate term (1 to 3 years):** Council can focus on long-term goals and fund strategies to accomplish

**Funding required?** Yes

**Legislation required?** Yes

## **Recommendation 5: Increase Usage of the Farm to Food Donation Tax Credit**

The Farm to Food Donation Tax Credit program has been in existence since 2014 and provides a tax credit to farmers who donate self-produced food commodities to food banks and food pantries. Farmers can earn a tax credit up to \$5,000 for the donation of these foods, however, the credit is not refundable and can only be used if the taxpayer has a liability.

### **Improve Internal Processes**

One of the challenges that members of the task force and stakeholders shared is that processes for food banks and food pantries to participate in the program can be burdensome. These organizations are often short-staffed and rely on the support of volunteers to achieve its mission of reducing food insecurity in Iowa.

The task force recommends that the Department of Revenue convene stakeholders to identify changes that could be made to internal processes and make the program easier to use for both taxpayers and food donation entities.

### **Build awareness and increase usage of the Program**

To date, the tax credit has been claimed by 53 unique individuals at a benefit of \$134,420. This equates to 16 claims per year and an average taxpayer savings of less than \$20,000 per year. This is an uncapped tax credit, meaning an unlimited number of taxpayers can claim the credit. The fact that this amount remains low is a concern and shows a need for further marketing of the program.

Through stakeholder feedback, the task force has learned that the credit is typically used by individuals who are donating out of the goodness of their hearts. Additionally, task force members were concerned that small scale farm operations often do not have an outstanding tax liability and are unable to benefit from the tax credit.

More should be done to promote or revise this program so farmers can reduce their tax burden while donating excess, unsold products to assist food banks and pantries. Additionally, in the future, the Legislature may want to consider revising the program to increase its usage. This could include increasing the value of the tax credit or changing the mechanism to an income deduction, refundable credit, or credit toward a forgivable loan.

### **Explore best practices and innovative food donation programs**

A long-range goal could be to explore the possibility of replicating other food donation programs in other states. This could include Michigan's "[Hoop houses for Health](#)" program where a farmer receives a forgivable loan to construct a hoop house. Any produce grown and sold from the hoop house to under-resourced families at farmers markets or donated to schools would then go towards repaying the loan.

Another program worth considering is [Ohio's Agricultural Clearance Program](#). This state-funded program is like the "Beef Up Iowa" and "Pass the Pork" programs that IDALS and the Food Bank Association have partnered on in recent years. Oftentimes, a farmer wants to donate an unprocessed beef or hog, but the food bank does not have the ability to transport, process, or store. This program helps defray those costs so that food banks can accept more fresh products and offer them to the individuals they serve.

These proposals will need further study before implementing.

**Who supports the work:** IDALS, ISUEO, DOR, food banks and pantries

**Timeline:**

- **Short term (up to 1 year):** Convene stakeholders and Department of Revenue to consider changes to internal processes
- **Intermediate term (1-3 years):** Increase usage of program by bringing awareness; explore successful food donation programs in other state and develop plan for funding and implementation
- **Long term (over 3 years):**

**Funding required?** No

**Legislation required?** No

## Appendix A: Taskforce Members

Name	Organization
John Lawrence	Iowa State University-Extension and Outreach
Mike Naig	Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
Colin Tadlock	Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
Courtney Long	Iowa State University-Extension and Outreach
Jan Libbey	One Step and a Time Gardens
Dave Rapson	Country View Dairy
Corinne Rowe	Rowe's Red Cows
Penny Brown Huber	Prairie Rivers of Iowa
Darrell Goering	Milo Locker
Steve Winders	Loffredo Fresh Produce
Jason Grimm	Iowa Valley RC&D; Grimm Family Farm
Kelly Foss	Des Moines Farmers Market
David Smigo	Cornell College Dining; Bon Appetit
Ellen Walsh-Rosmann	Harlan CSD Food Service; Farm Table Delivery
Matt Unger	Des Moines Area Religious Council
Aaron Lehman	Iowa Farmers Union



## **Appendix B: Glossary**

### **State of Iowa:**

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS)  
Department of Education (DOE)  
Department Public Health (DPH)  
Department Human Services (DHS)  
Department of Inspection and Appeals (DIA)  
Department of Revenue (DOR)  
Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA)  
Farm Service Agency (FSA)  
Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

### **Iowa State University**

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach (ISUEO)  
ISU Extension and Outreach Farm Food and Enterprise Development (FFED)  
Local Food and Farm Plan (LFFP)

### **Working Groups:**

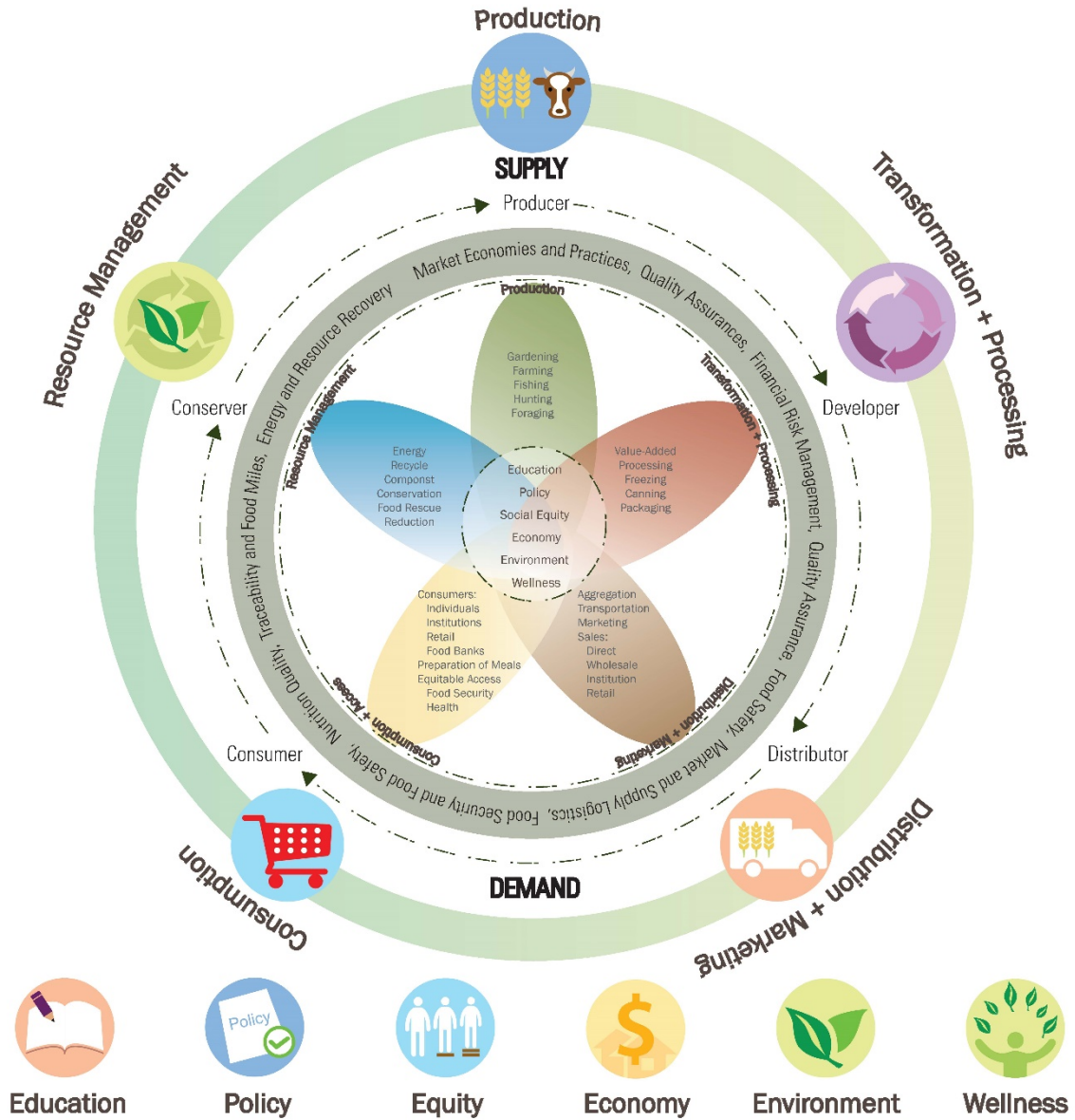
Food Hub Manager Working Group (FHMWG)  
Farm to School and Early Care Coalition (F2SEC)  
Regional Food Systems Working Group (RFSWG)]  
Iowa Food System Coalition

Institutions: include early care centers, K-12 schools, colleges, universities, hospitals, etc. (large scale buyers)

### **Federal Legislation:**

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act  
American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

# Appendix C: Food System Diagram



## Appendix D: Helpful Links

- 2011 LFFP:
  - <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/DF/13626.pdf>
- Iowa Bill SF578:
  - <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=89&ba=SF578> - see section 22
- Iowa Code: Chapter 190A: Farm to School Program:
  - <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/190A.pdf>
- Iowa Code: Chapter 190B: Farm to Food Donation Tax Credit and Emergency Food Purchases
  - <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/190B.pdf>
- Iowa Code: Chapter 267A: Local Food and Farm Program
  - <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/267A.pdf>
- IDALS Farm to School:
  - <https://iowaagriculture.gov/agricultural-diversification-market-development-bureau/iowa-farm-school-program>
- IDALS Directories:
  - <https://iowaagriculture.gov/administrative/licensed-businesses-ag-directories>
- IDALS Farmers Market:
  - <https://iowaagriculture.gov/agricultural-diversification-market-development-bureau/horticulture-and-farmers-markets>
- Local Produce and Protein Program Report:
  - [https://www.extension.iastate.edu/ffed/wp-content/uploads/Feb-16-\\_-Final-FHMMWG-LPPP-Eval-Report\\_-Reduced-size.pdf](https://www.extension.iastate.edu/ffed/wp-content/uploads/Feb-16-_-Final-FHMMWG-LPPP-Eval-Report_-Reduced-size.pdf)
- Fall 2021 Supplemental Report:
  - <https://iastate.app.box.com/s/yc1spv3qa5fy8yibgwg0rf9y19jnfh97>
- ISU Farm Food and Enterprise Development:
  - <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/ffed/>
- Map of food hub locations:
  - <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/ffed/iowa-food-hub-directory/>
- Regional Food Systems Working Group:
  - <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/ffed/regional-food-systems-working-group/>
- Farm to School and Early Care Coalition:
  - <https://www.iowafarmtoschoolearlycare.org/>

## Appendix E: Strengths, Challenges and Recommendations

In addition to showing the various areas of interest for each strength, challenge and recommendation; each taskforce member could vote for up to 3 top strengths, challenges and recommendations respectively. The numbers shown before are the total votes.

### Strengths:

Production	Processing	Distribution	Consumer	Resource management
High participation in conservation programs	Butchery Bill	Food Hubs (8)	Supplemental Nutrition Programs and support for buying local (5)	Farm to Food Donation Tax Credit (1)
Beginning Farm Tax Credit (1)	CIS- state inspected/ cross state border sales (3)	Logistical connections through nodes (3)	Farm to School purchases and increased interest (4)	Pass the Pork/ Beef Up Iowa
Farmers that have been doing this work a long time (3)	Various financial supports across the state/ leadership from different entities (1)		Pick a Better Snack incorporating local foods	Gleaning and Food Rescue (1)
			Local Food Makes Cents	
All				
Interest and passion in local and regional foods (7)				
Network and welcoming environment to get engaged with local foods				
USDA Value Added program/ Choose Iowa (2)				
Federal Microloans				
Job descriptions including farm to school or farm to table work				
Local food and farm plan fund and continuation of work				

## Challenges:

Production	Processing	Distribution	Consumer	Resource management
Access to land and capital (4)	No fruit and vegetable processing (7)	Supply- commodities vs. local (price point) (3)	Education for consumers on local/ regional foods (1)	Gleaning/ purchases from farmers for food banks (3)
Constraints/ risks for scaling up- unsure about market potential (2)	Lack of options for state inspected facilities for meat (4)	Scale of supply chain/ logistics (6)	Focus on commodity purchases	Grant management
No insurance for small farms	Gap in education on processing practices (all types of food) (1)	Gap in education on wholesale distribution/ business models	Seasonality - access to local during school session	
Seasonality / season extension programs (1)	Packaging and processing for smaller producers / scale and bulk products (1)		Need more markets- continued diversification and interest (1)	
Pesticide drift (2)				
Climate and growing conditions				
All				
Economies of Scale – focused on large scale production, what are the options for local and regional food production (2)				
Not a clear understanding of need – supply/ demand/ impact of increased production				
Investment hasn't met need- shifting state dollars				
General lack of understanding about how the food supply chain works, and importance of farmers and food businesses				
Access to capital- need options for low-interest or no interest loans from banks and financial institutions				
Labor shortages (1)				

**Recommendations:**

Production	Processing	Distribution	Consumer	Resource management
Incentivize production/processing and scaling up · Insurance (1) · De-risking educational workshops		Continue incentivizing food hubs for distribution local food products (LPPP) (7)	Pilot incentives for schools, health care organizations, and govt purchasers to buy local (LPPP) (2)	Streamline Farm to Food Donation tax credit (1)
Sample contracts for producers to sell to institutions	Offer education on processing and wholesale distribution business models		Turnkey guides for purchasers (methods for buying from producers and other businesses) (1)	
Land connection-- collaboration with existing farms (2) Incentivize partnerships of different scale farms	IDALS processing division (6)	Hitch a ride (back-hauling/ connect with other types of distributors) (5)	Increase consumer education around local foods and systems (2)	
Incentive to cover retail and wholesale packaging (2)		Expand local food day (more than one day a year) (2)		
Expand climate controlled ag (3)				
All				
Choose Iowa state branding/marketing (2)				
Develop process for tracking government agency and organization purchasing of local foods/data collection efforts				
Continuation of task force (6)				
Offer local food business course on financing and lending- how to work with banks				
Expand LFFI council				
Increase in investment for LFFI				
Grant management changes – make it easier				