



Our mission is to provide independence, hope and support. Easterseals Iowa provides exceptional services to ensure that all people with disabilities or special needs, and their families, have equal opportunities to live, learn, work and play in their communities.

Rural Solutions

A program of Easterseals Iowa

Program Overview FY17/18

The Rural Solutions program provides a unique service to Iowa farm family members ***not available through any other entity in the state of Iowa***. Founded by Easterseals Iowa in 1986, the program has received national and state awards and has been replicated in 27 states around the country.

Easter Seals Iowa offers agricultural work site and home modification consultations, peer support, services for the family, information and referrals and medical equipment loan services. Team members are knowledgeable about resources throughout the state that can address the unique needs of rural family members with disabilities, and actively pursue services that will enhance their lives. Any farm family member with a disability or individual with a disability is eligible for services through the Rural Solutions program. Easter Seals Iowa Rural Solutions services are provided free of charge to the individual and family receiving the services.

Farm Families Supported in the Past 32 Years

More than 2,000 Iowa farm family members with disabilities, from all 99 counties, have been supported since the start of the program. Due to changes in the farming operation or one's abilities, oftentimes farm family members are supported numerous times throughout their years of living and farming with a disability.

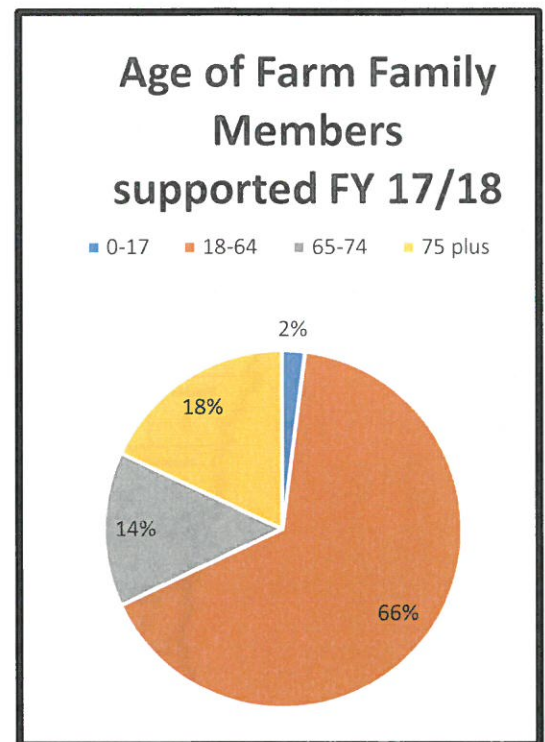
Farm Families Supported FY 17/18

In fiscal year 2017/18, the program supported 116 farm family members; 85 males and 31 females.

Legislative Funding History

FY 2007-2009 Funding: \$130,000 per year
FY 2010 Funding: \$108,000 (Governor Culver's executive order reduced funding to \$97,200.)

FY 11 Funding: \$97,000
FY 2012-2018 Funding: \$130,000 per year



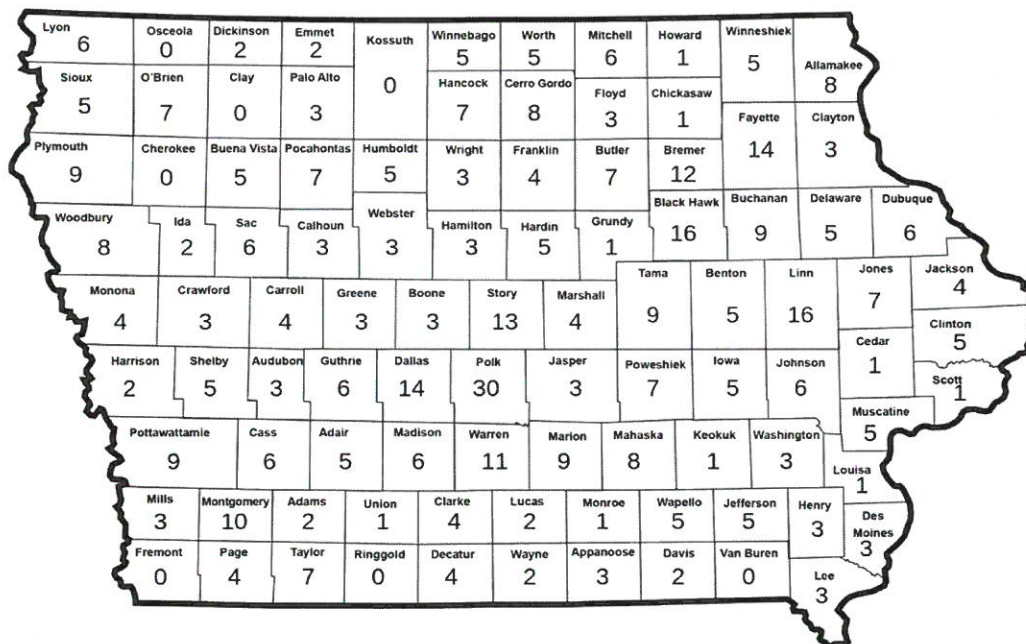
State Cost Avoidance

In FY 2017/18 the program supported 116 people, the vast majority of whom are working-age adults. Assuming program participants earn Iowa's average weekly wage of \$750¹, the average participant would earn \$39,000. With 116 participants, it's reasonable to assume the Rural Solutions Program brings, at minimum, \$4,524,000 in wages to Iowa by empowering individuals that may not otherwise work. Without the Rural Solutions program, many participants may find themselves on Social Security Disability² and Medicaid³—a program supported heavily by the state's general fund.

Additional Funding Would Achieve More

The Rural Solutions Program has served its full capacity of participants for the past few years. Our staff and state funding, though generous, have not allowed us to expand services and meet the program's demands that we know exists. With an additional \$70,000 for the program, we can expand services to meet the needs of additional participants. These additional resources could bring nearly another \$1 million in wages to Iowa. In summary, a \$200,000 appropriation to Rural Solutions would bring approximately \$5.5 million in wages to Iowa's economy. The Rural Solutions program keeps farmers farming and contributes to the vitality of rural Iowa. For many farm family members and rural residents with a disability, Rural Solutions represents their only hope of returning to farming and their communities.

Counties & Participants Served in 2018



¹ https://www.bls.gov/regions/midwest/news-release/countyemploymentandwages_iowa.htm#QCEW_iowa_chart1

² The average monthly payment from Social Security Disability is about \$1,000 in Iowa.

³ The average cost to Medicaid of an individual with a disability was \$19,742 in FY 2014. <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/state-indicator/medicaid-spending-per-enrollee> The state's general fund contributes approximately 22 percent of the state's Medicaid costs, or about \$1.6 billion.