



Northeast Iowa Food & Farm Coalition January 4, 2010

The NIFF Coalition met on January 4, 2010 at noon via teleconference with 14 people present: Teresa Wiemerslage, Eric Nordschow, Mary Steen, Johnice Cross, Lyle Luzum, Dan Bellrichard, Dan Lane, Dan Burkhart, Bonnie Bishop, Ann Bushman, Gordon Murray-John, Ben Lewis, Karla Organist, Lori Lechtenberg,

The minutes from December were reviewed and approved.

REPORTS

Education Committee

- Marketing your product for retail with Oneota Coop
- Meeting with school food service directors on Jan 15 in West Union
- Midwest Value Added Conference, Eau Claire, WI
 - Attending: Teresa Wiemerslage (presenting with Rich Pirog), Dan Lane, Craig Chase, Johnice Cross, Lisa and Trampes Curtin, Denise Buddenberg, Bob Raymond, Mari Holthaus, Anna Neumann, Carolyn Corbin.

Regional Food System Working Group meeting, Dec 16. Distribution challenges. Attending: Teresa Wiemerslage, Brenda Ranum, Trampes and Lisa Curtin, Johnice Cross. Talked about the distribution issues. Panel discussion with Phil Danowhski, Red Tomato, Iowa Food Coop, Cedar Valley Fresh. Optional session discussion with Farm to School, policy changes, and beginning farmers.

Update with Luther College on Dec 16 with ideas on uses for century farm. Created more awareness about local foods. There are grant opportunities available through Great Places to help improve the barn infrastructure.

The group NIFF Coalition reviewed the Year End Report and approved it. The group reviewed the Farm to School final report for IDALS grant and approved it. Copies of both reports will be posted to www.iowafoodandfitness.org.

The group discussed the meeting schedule for 2010. First Thursdays seem to work. Face to face is important, but teleconferences could work too. Teresa will bring back exact dates next month.

Microloan Committee. 21 applications for microloan. 18 have been funded. Repayment is in good shape. Loans are \$5000-30,000, interest is 2% above prime. Each producer gets \$500 technical assistance. Host group gets \$500.

Meeting adjourned at 1 pm.

Other items:

Education Committee met at 11 am via teleconference: Mary Steen, Dan Lane, Johnice Cross, Ben Lewis, Teresa Wiemerslage, Dan Burkhart, Karla Organist.

Reviewed the Jan 4 program. 37 attended. Good reviews.

Discussed having a program for those interested in direct marketing meat. Have a producer panel to talk about what they've learned and how to get started. Mike Lorenz from Lorenz Meats has the pricing information in a presentation. Have him give his presentation (45 minutes) and follow with a panel discussion (45 min) (Grass Run, Healthy Edge, Delaware Co. Meats?).

Action Items:

- Edgwood Locker is hosting a workshop with ISU in March??? Teresa
- Dan Lane will check with PFI .
- Marketing at Farmers Markets: meat and produce (March or April). Check with Andy Larson.

Other upcoming programs:

Wisconsin School For Beginning Market Growers

January 15, 16, 17, 2010 | Madison, WI

Intensive three-day school demonstrates what it takes to set up and run a successful organic market garden or small farm. Topics include soil fertility, greenhouses, pest management, tools and equipment, post-harvest handling, marketing, and more! To learn more, contact John Hendrickson at 608-265-3704 or jhendric@wisc.edu. **Sign-up deadline is January 4, 2010.**

Cost: \$275 / \$150 for an additional spouse or partner.

Midwest School for Beginning Apple Growers

February 5-7, 2010 | Madison, WI

This intensive, three-day course gives you a realistic picture of what it takes to run a successful orchard operation-including capital, management, labor and other resources. Topics include soil fertility, pest management, business planning, risk management, record-keeping, marketing and economics. [Learn more online](#), or contact John Hendrickson, 608-265-3704, jhendric@wisc.edu. **Registration deadline: Jan. 22, 2010.**

Cost: \$300 for the course, add \$150 for spouses/partners.

MOSES 21st Annual Organic Farming Conference

February 25-27, 2010 | La Crosse, WI

<http://www.mosesorganic.org/conference>