



THE LAND USE BULLETIN

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Iowa Choice Harvest

Practices from the past building a bright future for local food

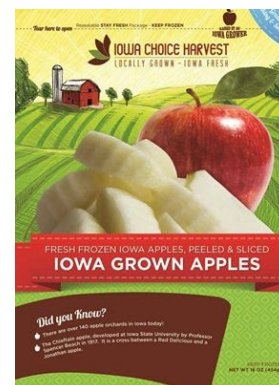
Iowa Choice Harvest opened its doors last summer just in time to freeze sweet corn and later, apples. The new business, located in Marshalltown, is a processing plant for Iowa-grown fruits and vegetables. It took seven years of planning for the group of 26 member owners to build their vision into reality.



Iowa Choice Harvest is composed of 60% Iowa producers, and 40% Iowa non-producers. Their mission is to “connect customers with earth-conscious farmers who grow high quality fruits and vegetables.”

In 1924 there were 58 canning facilities preserving sweet corn in 36 counties in Iowa. By the late 90’s, there were just two left. (Pirog, et. al., 2001). So, when the member-owners began looking for a suitable plant, they found there were no food-grade plants in Iowa with the infrastructure capacity they needed. The decision was made to repurpose an existing space inside the city limits, and the group built their own facility inside a warehouse in Marshalltown.

The availability of locally grown, high quality, flavorful product during winter months has been touted at Dahls, Hy-Vee, Fareway and other independent grocery stores across the state. More and more grocers have responded to the popularity of the product and introduced the line in their freezer sections.



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1000 Friends of Iowa is a statewide non-profit organization founded in 1998 based in Des Moines, Iowa.

1000 Friends of Iowa promotes responsible development that

- Conserves and protects our agricultural and natural resources
- Revitalizes our neighborhoods, towns and cities, and
- Improves the quality of life for future generations

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1000 Friends of Iowa member Craig Griffieon grew the 2013 sweet corn crop for Iowa Choice Harvest. He was pleased to be able to diversify his farm's crops and purchased a non-GMO sweet corn seed variety. His picture and story is featured on the back of the bag. The packaging was designed and printed in Iowa by Iowa companies.



Farmer Craig Griffieon of Ankeny, IA, grows the sweet corn that Iowa Choice Harvest then processes, packages and sells locally. (Photo credit: Iowa Choice Harvest Facebook page)

JOIN US

August 9th at
our Annual
Meeting for a
tour of Iowa
Choice Har-
vest's process-
ing plant in
Marshalltown!

Apples grown by orchards in Earlham, Iowa Falls, Montour, Marshalltown, Nashua and Strawberry Point were peeled, sliced and frozen last fall. The orchards were thrilled to have an outlet that packages for grocery store and wholesale use in a year when apple production was phenomenal.

Today, Iowa Choice Harvest has two full-time staff and three half-time staff, as well as temporary workers during the production season.

Business is booming for Iowa Choice Harvest. People are excited about seeing the locally grown & harvested fruits and vegetables in their grocer's freezer. What isn't getting much attention is this enterprise's potential on Iowa's economy.

Iowans spend \$10 Billion a year on food, but Iowa currently imports 86 percent of its food from outside the state. Those aren't good numbers for a state that claims to feed the world.

1000 Friends of Iowa's 2014 Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, August 9th, at the IVCCD Orpheum Theater Center in Marshalltown. The theme this year is "Iowa—Garden of Eatin". Exactly as the name implies, the annual meeting will focus on local food security, community based food systems, economics of local foods, and the future of small town/rural Iowa.

In the morning, attendees will walk to the Iowa Choice Harvest processing plant and be given a tour of the facility led by plant manager, Craig Schultz.

A locally grown lunch will be prepared by 1000 Friends of Iowa's Board of directors. Featuring meat and vegetables from the Griffieon Family Farm, and Iowa-grown fruits and vegetables processed at the Iowa Choice Harvest plant.

In the afternoon, Matt Russell, State Food Policy Director at Drake University, will discuss local food security, community based food system, economics of local foods, and the future of small towns & rural areas in Iowa. As the State Food Policy Director, Matt is responsible for projects relating to improving the opportunities in Iowa's food system and rural economy. In addition to his work at Drake, Matt and his husband Patrick Standley operate Coyote Run Farm, a 110 acre farm in rural Lacona. They market fresh produce, eggs, and beef at farmers markets and other local outlets. He serves on the Iowa Farm Service Agency State Committee of the USDA, the Marion County Development Commission, and on the board of the Iowa Network for Community Agriculture.

We hope you'll join us on August 9th to learn about the importance of local food security and a community-based food system to the State of Iowa.

Call for 2014 BDA Nominations!

1000 Friends of Iowa is accepting nomination for the 2014 Best Development Awards. Look around. Good things are happening all over Iowa. What examples of preservation, restoration, revitalization, sustainability & leadership do you see in your town? Do you know a great project in your area deserving of recognition? Are the smart growth efforts of your community leaders so successful Iowans could benefit from seeing what they've done? Are there developers who've worked to preserve your community by restoring rather than tearing down? What about a new development where planners included elements such as complete streets, integration with the existing community, and energy efficiency?

We want to hear from you! Acknowledge, recognize & help showcase the hard work of those in your community by nominating people, projects, companies for the 2014 Best Development Awards.

1000 Friends of Iowa established the Best Development Awards in 2001. The awards showcase development projects and programs in Iowa that best reflect the principles of smart growth and sustainability. They also recognize the efforts of businesses, developers, cities, organizations, and individuals responsible for these projects.

Awards are given in the following seven categories:

- New Residential
- Renovated Residential
- Renovated Commercial/Civic
- New Commercial/Civic
- Mixed Use
- Leadership
- Storm Water Management

The winners of the Best Development Awards are models of how responsible development practices provide benefits to the community, the environment, and the quality of life for future generations.

If there is a project in your community you believe deserves recognition, please visit our website, www.1000friendsofiowa.org, to learn more about the simple nomination process, as well as browse the previous recipients of our Best Development Awards. The deadline to submit nominations is September 29, 2014. If you have any questions or comments, please send an email to Crystal Leto at crystal.r.let@gmail.com.

We look forward to hearing from you!

“Iowa—Garden of Eatin’
Economics of Community Based Food Systems
1000 Friends of Iowa 2014 Annual Meeting Agenda
Date: August 9, 2014
Time: 9:15 AM – 4:00 PM
Location: IVCCD Orpheum Theater Center
220 East Main Street, Marshalltown, IA

9:15 – 9:45 a.m.	Registration, Coffee, Breakfast Breads
9:45 – 10:00 a.m.	Welcome John Morrissey, 1000 Friends of Iowa Board President
10:00 – 10:15 a.m.	Walk to Iowa Choice Harvest
10:15 – 11:15 a.m.	Tour Iowa Choice Harvest Craig Schultz, Iowa Choice Harvest Plant Manager
11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Return to Orpheum
11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	2013 Best Development Awards Presentation Doug Adamson
12:15 p.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Break
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.	Local Food Luncheon, Provided by Griffieon Family Farm
1:30 – 2:15 p.m.	Economics of Local Food & Future of Small Towns & Rural Areas Matt Russell, State Food Policy Coordinator, Drake University Agricultural Law Center
2:15 – 2:30 p.m.	Break
2:30 – 3:30 p.m.	Business Meeting, Board Member Elections, Program Survey John Morrissey, Board President
3:30 - 4:00 p.m.	Closing Comments, Q&A, Adjourn John Morrissey

2014 ANNUAL MEETING REGISTRATION

Register for the 2014 Annual Meeting TODAY!

All events and an Iowa grown lunch are included in the cost of registration.

Use the registration form provided below, or visit www.1000friendsofiowa.org to register online using a credit card. Registrations must be received by Friday, July 25, 2014.

Registration is \$40 for members (\$30 for additional attendees who attend as guests of a member), \$60 for the general public, and \$20 for students.

Number of Attendees: _____ **Amount Enclosed: \$** _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip Code** _____

Email _____ @ _____ . _____

Additional Attendees

Guest 1 _____

Guest 2 _____

Please mail your registration and check payable to:

1000 Friends of Iowa

3850 Merle Hay Road, Suite 605

Des Moines, IA 50310-1300

Confirmation will be emailed to all registered participants. Your email address will not be shared or sold.

***NEWS* from Around the State**

4” Topsoil Rule Needs YOUR Support!

The IDNR is still receiving public comments on the NPDES General Permit No. 2, a rule to preserve 4" of topsoil at construction sites, and it is in need of YOUR support!

As an undeveloped area is changed to urban, commercial, or industrial use, natural cover is removed and the chance of erosion problems increases. Controlling erosion, water quality and developing procedures to manage construction sites to reduce off-site water pollution is a major concern.

According to the USDA Natural Resources Inventory, in the thirty years between 1977 and 2007 Iowa lost 642,700 acres of prime farmland. That trend continues. Currently, the packed clay under the thin layer of topsoil on this developed land allows for very little water to infiltrate.

We need to retain four inches of healthy soil to establish healthy landscapes (lawn, gardens, native plantings, trees and shrubs) as well as improve on-site storm water retention and infiltration, lessen runoff, soil erosion, reduce flooding and improve water quality.

Learn more about this issue and review public comments already received at <http://www.iowadnr.gov/InsideDNR/RegulatoryWater.aspx>.

Comments may be submitted by email to Adam Schnieders, NPDES Program Supervisor, Adam.Schnieders@dnr.iowa.gov. Please take a moment and show your support for preserving topsoil at construction sites today!

MPO Seeks Public Comment on Funding for 600 Transportation Projects

The Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is inviting public comment on which transportation projects should receive funding. Over 600 projects were proposed for funding from central Iowa's transportation agency. The MPO will accept public comments until July 15th.

The MPO's long-range transportation plan is part of The Tomorrow Plan, which aims to address transportation, housing and environmental health in the region through the year 2050.

Projects proposed for funding include:

- The extension of Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway east toward Pleasant Hill
- Widening Iowa Highway 5 from four lanes to six
- The extension of Veterans Parkway, also called the Southwest Connector, in West Des Moines
- Widening Interstate 80/35 from six to eight lanes
- The replacement or repair of several vehicle and pedestrian bridges downtown
- The extension or improvement of several bus routes

Additional details are available on the MPO's website including an interactive map of all the projects. Visit www.dmampo.org to learn more.

Don't miss this opportunity to share your opinion!

EATING IOWA

Guest Column by Mark S. Edwards

Let's eat. I'm hungry. What's to eat? In Iowa, we import 86% of what we eat, and it comes from an average of 1,500 miles away. Shocking, isn't it?

Here in Iowa, where we "feed the world", we sure feed ourselves some awful good sound bites.

Whether we're farmers, vegetarians, or supermarket shoppers, we have very similar choices in getting our food. We roam the isles of stores with hundreds of products, but most of them are highly processed, packaged and provided by a system we little understand.

The more I care and know, the more confused and scared I am.

I have a friend, Michael, who drives a semi-truck across the country. He picked up a load of tomato sauce on the north side of a brick building here in Iowa. The tomato sauce had been shipped there from out of state. He drove the load of tomato sauce to San Diego, California where other ingredients were added, then drove it back to the south side of the same building in Iowa he started from. Later, he picked up the final product, "Authentic Chicago Style" pizza sauce, and delivered it to Chicago.

When I think about it, I realize our pizza, and most of our meals, are made this way. Vegetables, preservatives and cheap labor are the ingredients from California, if we're lucky. The trade figures show more of our food is being grown and processed in South America, Australian and China.

What have we traded for this? Half of our Iowa topsoil has been lost to grow our few crops and critters. We are losing agricultural soil at 16 times the replacement rate even with all our conservation practices in place.

The 2014 Farm Bill actually cut Conservation Title funding by billions. This is the first time a farm bill

decreased funding for conservation since its inception in 1985.

In a few generations we changed Iowa into the most biologically altered state in North America. We cultivated 95%, or 56,290 square miles into just a few species. We consume two-thirds, yes **two-thirds**, of Iowa's 36 million acres for only **two** plants - corn and soybeans—which are mostly used for fuel and feed for livestock.

These two plants plowed up the homes of millions of animals and plants. They require vast amounts of petroleum, chemical fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides and soil loss. These toxic ingredients ensure we have the worst surface water quality in the nation. It has changed our homeland into a monoculture mess leaving a menu we can't live on for long.

In addition to corn and soybeans, another fourth, yes a **fourth**, of Iowa is exchanged for hay, pasture, and confinement buildings for livestock.

There are about 8,000 factory farms with thousands of buildings containing chickens, cattle and hogs. Iowa's hog industry alone produces the sewage equivalent of 471 million people which is equal to 150 times the population of Iowa. Pigs and poultry permeate the land, water and air of Iowa and all the way to the Gulf of Mexico.

I'm hungry for something more to eat than these meager statistics here in the "bread basket of the world."

Whether you call it creation or evolution, we are trading our water, land, health and future along with the butterflies, bees, birds and fish for a fast food meal of meat, cooked in soy oil with authentic Iowa corn syrup tomato sauce on top.

Don't get me wrong, I love burgers, pizza and Iowa, but I'm starving for some other choices.



Stone City, Iowa 1930 Grant Wood, 1891-1942
Citizens United for Responsible Land Use

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Des Moines, IA 50310-1600

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

SAVE THE DATE!

Join us **August 9th** for Our 2014 Annual Meeting!

The theme this year is:

“Iowa—Garden of Eatin’”

Economics of Community Based Food Systems

- Tour Iowa’s only locally-grown food processing plant
- Featured Speaker: Matt Russell, State Food Policy Director at Drake University

Additional details, the full agenda and registration information
inside this issue!