



1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL  
LOCAL FOODS  
&  
FARMERS MARKET  
SUMMIT

# LOCAL FOOD & FARMERS MARKET SUMMIT

FEBRUARY 9TH, 2017

NORTHEAST IOWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
WILDER BUSINESS CENTER, CALMAR, IA

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# LOCAL FOOD & FARMERS MARKET SUMMIT



Time	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3
8:30 a.m.	Welcome from Northeast Iowa Community College Dr. Liang Chee Wee, Ph.D., President		
8:45 - 9:30 a.m.	Keynote Speaker Chris Blanchard Value and Scale in the Local Foods Marketplace		
9:30 -10 a.m.	30 minute break		
10 - 10:50 a.m.		Market and Farm Photography; Lessons Learned	FSMA and GroupGAP Program and Certification Information
11 - 11:30 a.m.	How to Utilize the Community Food System Program	Farmers Market Managing 101	Farmers' Market Vending 101
11:30 a.m. - Noon			Beyond the Farmers Market, Where Can I Sell?
Noon-1 p.m.	Lunch		
1 - 1:45 p.m.		Health & Safety 101 for Farmers' Market in Iowa	Farm Opportunity Panel
1:45 - 2:30 p.m.			
2:30 -2:45 a.m.	15 minute break		
2:45 - 3:45 p.m.	The Power of Local Food in the Local Economy	Developing and Building Partners & Programs	Scaling up to Fill the Plate
3:45 - 4:15 p.m.	Developing and Building Partners & Programs	Making the Most of your Farmers Market	

# KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Chris  
Blanchard

Mr. Blanchard provides consulting and education for farming, food, and business through Purple Pitchfork. He has worked in farming for the past 24 years, managing farms and operations around the country. As the owner and operator of Rock Spring Farm from 1999 to 2014, Chris raised 20-acres of vegetables, herbs, and greenhouse crops, marketed through a 200-member year-round CSA, food stores, and farmers markets. Chris has experienced the local food system from all points of view. In addition to managing his own operation, he has managed student farms, worked as an intern, packing house manager, plant breeding assistant and a farm manager. He is a consultant working with farmers, food businesses and institutions from coast to coast and the host and producer of the Farmer to Farmer Podcast.

## Keynote: Value and Scale in the Local Foods Marketplace

Chris understands that balancing the reasons we choose to farm with the economic realities of the modern food system can challenge even the most experienced grower. He has seen many beginning growers wash up on the rocks of scaling-up. He has also worked with local growers that have questions about size and values that create conflict within the local foods movement. Mr. Blanchard will discuss how we can root our growth in good business, while not losing sight of the fertile values in which that growth occurs.



## Scaling Up to Fill the Plate

Mr. Blanchard understands that there is pressure from every direction to scale up market farming operations to meet the growing demand for local food. He also realizes that growers need to consider their goals, roles, capacity, and skills. His talk will help attendees explore the challenges and opportunities that go along with expanding a market farm so they are better equipped to move forward in a way that brings out their best. His honest insight and extensive experience inform and inspire.

# PRESENTERS



Steve  
McCargar

McCargar has been the Market Manager for the Winneshiek Farmers Market for 6 seasons and involved with the market

in some capacity since 1976 when it was created. He has diverse experience in local government, small business and community action, including start-up of the Oneota Food Coop, serving as its Manager and later as its Board Chair. He has also served as a Winneshiek County Supervisor. The Winneshiek Farmer's Market is in Decorah, Iowa in the Oneota Food Co-op parking lot. Market items are either grown or made by the vendors and all 65 vendors are from within 60 miles. The market boasts live music and cooking demonstrations. It draws visitors from around the region. McCargar has helped the market become one of the most successful small, rural, farmers markets in Iowa.



Erik  
Sessions

Sessions is one of the most successful produce vendors at the Decorah Farmers Market, has built a thriving

CSA business, and recently started a successful Market Share Program. After several years of renting garden space and introducing products to the Decorah community, Erik and his wife Sara purchased a small farm north of Decorah. Since that purchase in 2001, they have worked to improve the 5-acres of annual vegetable ground with crop rotations, cover crops, compost and diversified vegetables. Patchwork Green Farm focuses on flavorful, clean, beautiful and organic (non-certified) produce. Workshop discussion can turn to infrastructure on the farm, employee and time management, market stall display, quality control and customer satisfaction.



Jason  
Grimm

Grimm is the Food System Planner with the Iowa Valley RC&D in eastern Iowa. He has been with Iowa Valley RC&D

since 2009 as the project manager of their Regional Food Initiative. In his position, he coordinates projects including beginning farmer and rancher training, regional farm to school development, food business development and collection of regional food system metrics. He is also currently working with Northeast Iowa RC&D on development of a statewide farmers market manager training manual. Jason's work with local food system is enhanced by his first hand knowledge with local food production. He farms with his family near Williamsburg. Grimm Family Farm produces dry beans, produce and pastured poultry. His products are sold to institutions, restaurants, cooperatives and other buyers throughout the state.

# PRESENTERS



Courtney  
Long

Long is a Program Coordinator with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach in the departments of Agriculture

and Natural Resources and Community and Economic Development. Courtney manages the development and implementation of the Agricultural Urbanism Toolkit, a three-year community design process in partnership with communities in Iowa. This program partners directly with the Community Design Lab and additional departments on the Iowa State Campus. She is passionate about community engagement, public health, food access and holistic programming. The Agricultural Urbanism Toolkit process develops trust and community coalitions, facilitates public input sessions, conducts spatial assessment, and designs relevant food system projects. Courtney has been working with local food systems and design for access to healthy, local and regional foods since 2010 with various appointments and research.



Cindy  
Mensen

Mensen has been the Executive Director for United States Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency in Clayton County since 2001. She has worked for the USDA,

providing services to thousands of producers for over 30 years. She will be providing information about the Non Insurable Disaster Assistance program, which is an insurance program that is available for producers who grow crops for which they can not get insurance through a regular crop insurer. Qualifying crops include strawberries, green beans, honey and other specialty crops. Cindy will also help producers and others understand how to sign up for email access to Farm Service Agency programs. She will also provide information about USDA loan programs, which are available to producers planning to purchase farms, for operations or equipment. Many of these loans are micro loans that are used for smaller purchases, such as equipment and storage units, refrigerated trucks or other items necessary for successful establishment, growth and or expansion of local food businesses.



Lora Friest

Friest is the Executive Director for Northeast Iowa RC&D, a private nonprofit whose Mission is to "Recognize opportunities and provide leadership

to make Northeast Iowa a vibrant, place-based model for the nation!" She is a UNI graduate who has worked for the past 17 years at the RC&D planning and implementing new programs, projects and initiatives that help partners throughout the state achieve their vision. She was the principle writer for Northeast Iowa's initial W.K.Kellogg Local Food and Fitness application and has written millions of dollars in successful Value Added Producer and other state and federal grants to help local food producers start up or expand value added businesses. She and her RC&D team also bring together producers and producer groups from across the region and the state with economic development leaders to develop local food, farm, and farmers market initiatives and projects that enhance Northeast Iowa's small business climate, branding, and breadth and scope of the local foods market.

# PRESENTERS



Todd  
Duncan

Duncan has been the District Conservationist for USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service in the Winneshiek County office for over twenty years, where

he has provided assistance to thousands of producers in one of the most active counties in Iowa. The Natural Resource Conservation Service provides America's farmers and ranchers with financial and technical assistance to voluntarily put conservation on the ground, helping protect the environment and maximize agricultural operations. They have a variety of programs intended for farmers, ranchers and forest landowners. Todd will provide information about the programs that local food producers could utilize, including the Environmental Quality Incentive Program - EQIP, which provides cost-share and incentives for High Tunnels, grazing, organic production and other agricultural practices. He will be available to explain how payment rates are determined, who qualifies for the incentives and the process that producers use to sign-up for and utilize the programs.



Samantha  
Wagner

Wagner serves as Region 6 Regional Manager for the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation. She works with county officers and committees to develop and

carry out programs activities, organizes and assists with the annual membership campaign and supervise the operation of county Farm Bureau offices in the region. She grew up on a family dairy farm near Monona and is a graduate of Iowa State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Studies. Samantha will discuss opportunities for Entrepreneurs, including the Value Added Ag Support Team and Renew Rural Iowa program. The Iowa Farm Bureau Federation is a grassroots, statewide organization dedicated to enhancing the "People, Progress and Pride of Iowa". More than 159,000 families in Iowa are Farm Bureau members, working together to achieve farm and rural prosperity.



Liz  
Kolbe

Kolbe joined the Practical Farmers of Iowa staff in the summer of 2013. She works primarily in horticulture, focusing on cooperators' program research,

pesticide drift issues, and field day and event planning. A native of Grinnell, Iowa, Liz received her B.A. in Environmental Science at Colorado College, focusing on renewable energy in the West and the impacts of ethanol production. Following graduation, she worked as the Program Coordinator for the State of the Rockies Project and earned her M.S. in Environmental Science with a specialization in Agroecosystem Science at Ohio State University. While at OSU and based at the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center in Wooster, Ohio, Liz worked with the Agroecosystems Management Program and was a "super-volunteer" at Local Roots Market. She enjoys playing sports, scouring garage sales, and reading short stories. She also serves on the board of directors for Wheatsfield Coop.

# PRESENTERS



Sara  
Broers

Broers is an inspirational and motivational speaker who is also the co-founder and co-owner of the Midwest Travel

Bloggers since 2015 with Lisa Trudell of the The Walking Tourists. She feels that the Midwest Travel Blogger allows her to share her knowledge and passion for the Midwest. Broers notes that the feature writers of Midwest Travel Bloggers are all based in midwest states and have a desire to promote tourism in “flyover states” and they also have a passion of supporting local. Broers and Trudell have worked with communities to host blogger tours and try to encourage people to travel in smaller communities. She is also social media instructor, manages social media accounts and is a travel writer for Travel With Sara. She uses Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, Google+ and Flipboard.



Jessica  
Rilling

Rilling is Executive Director for Iowa Valley RC&D where she coordinates and implements regional projects

in tourism, natural resources, the arts, and local foods. She has has a strong background in conservation, grant writing, and marketing. In 2010, she started Jessica Rilling Photography, which has a strong focus areas on tourism, historic sites, scenic byways, land stewardship, and farming with an emphasis on local foods and farmers markets. She has partnered on projects with the Northeast Iowa Tourism Association the Iowa League of RC&Ds, and the Northeast Iowa Farmers Market Council. Her photographs have been displayed in high end restaurants, used in regional and state tourism publications and websites and been on the cover of Travel Iowa. Her photography can be seen at [JessicaRillingPhotography.com](http://JessicaRillingPhotography.com).



Kayla  
Koether

Koether is a Food Systems Specialist for Iowa State University Extension and Outreach in six counties in northeast Iowa.

She grew up near McGregor on a rotational grazing farm, where she got hooked on local, healthy food and regenerative farming systems. Her grazing passions led her to study International Agriculture and Rural Development at Grinnell College, which allowed her to travel to India and Mongolia and learn about agriculture and pastoralism abroad. She worked for AmeriCorps with the Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative and the Winneshiek Energy District. When she's not thinking about food, farming, and revitalizing rural Iowa, you can catch her doing yoga, playing music, horseback riding, or reading. Kayla currently works with the Extension Local Foods Team where she specializes in beginning farmer education and outreach.

# PRESENTERS



Georgia  
Windhorst

Windhorst is a graduate of Luther College where she developed a specific interest in the local food system. After

graduation, Windhorst decided to stay in Northeast Iowa and become involved with the local food system. In December 2014, she joined the Iowa Food Hub and is now their General Manager. The Iowa Food Hub is a local food distribution business based in West Union Iowa that acts as a bridge between food producers and consumers, thus creating a mutually beneficial relationship between the two groups. Its goals are to increase small and medium size farm viability, help the local economy, foster job creation and development, increase food access and equality, help beginning farmers and conduct food research and education. They have a full product line including eggs, meats, dairy, produce, baked goods and grocery items from the tri-state area.



Betsy  
Peirce

Peirce is the Produce Manager for the Oneota Community Food Co-op in Decorah, Iowa, which has

a large produce section with beautiful, seasonally-focused fresh fruit and vegetables. The Board of Directors for the Co-op has set aggressive goals for local purchases. In 2015, over 22%, or \$1,113,377, of the the Co-op's sales met their definition of local: any product grown, produced, roasted, processed, or packaged within approximately a 100-mile radius of the Co-op. Much of the produce is organically grown, benefiting personal health and the environment. Betsy and her staff work with over a dozen local growers. Other departments, such as the meat, bulk, dairy and deli, sell local products as well. The Winneshiek Farmers Market, held in the lower parking lot seasonally, actually increases Co-op business.



Josh  
Dansdill

Dansdill is currently serves as the Regional Farmers Market Coordinator for Northeast Iowa RC&D where he provides technical assistance with farm and

business planning and marketing for local food producers from across the region. Josh worked with local producers to develop and now coordinates the Farmers Market Advisory Council (FMAC). He worked with producers and partners from around the region to develop the Northeast Iowa Local Food Expansion Plan, which he is now helping implement. He created and manages social media sites for 24 Farmers Markets and works with those Farmers Markets to evaluate and make recommendations for business opportunities for individual producers and for future growth of individual and collective sales. He provides business planning, marketing, and research assistance to grower groups including the Northeast Iowa Grassfed Producer Council. He has a BA from Luther College in Business Management. Dansdill has previous work experience with the Oneota Food Co-op and Seed Savers Exchange.

# PRESENTERS



Kurt Rueber

Rueber is a Food Safety Specialist with the Iowa Department of Inspections & Appeals, Inspections Division. Kurt has worked in the

food safety field for 35 years, with more than 20 years in a regulatory role. He is an expert in Iowa's licensing and inspections including Farmers' Market Regulations and the new Food Safety Act. The Iowa Department of Inspections & Appeals provides licenses for mobile food, home food, food processing, temporary food establishments and farmers markets where potentially hazardous food is sold or distributed. A separate license is required for each county in which a vendor sells food. The license is only valid at farmers markets and if a vendor operates two or more stands simultaneously, a separate license is required for each unit. Canned goods, except jams and jellies, must be from a licensed food processing plant.



Merri Cross

Cross is a Food Safety Specialist with the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals. She previously worked as one of six restaurant

inspectors with the North Central Iowa Regional Inspection Division, a branch of the Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health and as a Licensed Environmental Health Practitioner at the Bond County Health Department. She also served as a Board member for the Iowa Environmental Health Association. Cross can clarify which products may be sold at farmers markets to consumer customers without being licensed as a food establishment at the market location and which may not without appropriate licensing from local, state or federal authorities and what type of licenses are needed. She can explain licenses, records for, and the labeling needed for, everything from wild mushrooms, baked goods, to canned goods and other foods.





# COURSE SUMMARY

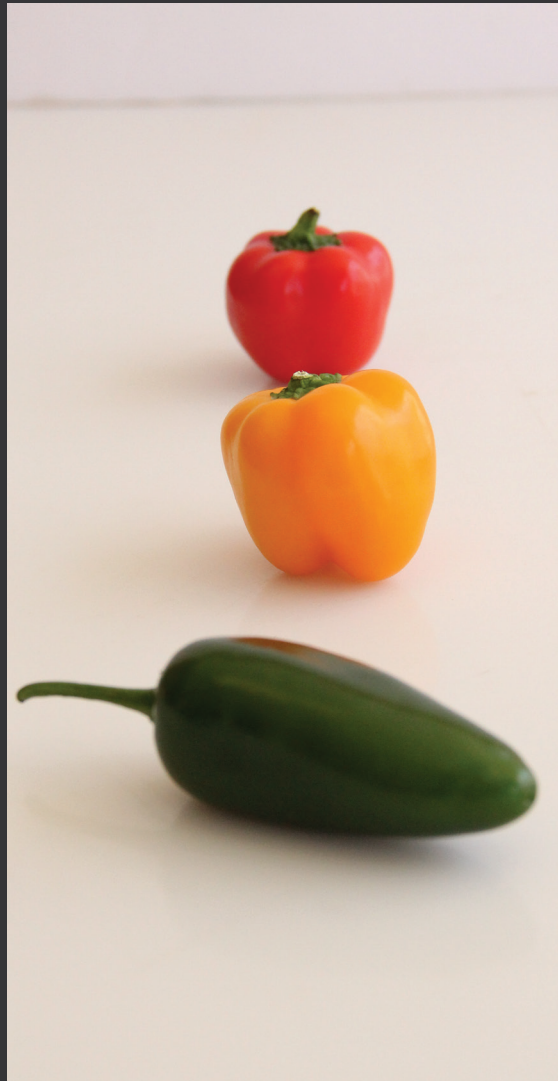
## SESSION 1

### KEYNOTE: Value and Scale in the Local Foods Marketplace

Balancing the reasons we choose to farm with the economic realities of the modern food system can challenge even the most experienced grower, and while beginning growers wash up on the rocks of scaling-up, questions about size and values create conflict within the local foods movement. Chris Blanchard will discuss how we can root our growth in good business, while not losing sight of the fertile values in which that growth occurs.

### The Power of Local Food in the Rural Economy

Communities are working with bloggers across the country and are doing some amazing things! Marketing in 2017 looks to be exciting through the power of social media and the Internet. As more folks in rural America are embracing the Online world, it's also helping the Midwest from an economic standpoint. Hear about the power of bloggers, social media and how tourism partners can and do benefit from blogging partnerships.



### How to Utilize the Community Food System Program

The Community Food Systems Program is led by ISU's Community Design Lab in partnership with the ISU Extension and Outreach Local Foods Program, with funding from the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture. Hear how it incorporates a process that promotes public interest through engagement with community leaders, leading to a holistic design incorporating community values around food.

### Developing and Building Projects and Partners

Local food growers, tourism and economic develop directors, farmers markets, local food hubs and value added businesses are all part of the local food system. Friest has been working with partners and developing projects to expand Northeast Iowa's local food system for nearly two decades. Learn how and why you can maximize partnerships as she share some tips, tricks and ideas that help you partners with others to build your own local food system.

# COURSE SUMMARY

## SESSION 2

### Market and Farm Photography; Lessons Learned

Photography is an essential part of successful business development and marketing. When combined with the growth of social media and the potential for local marketing partnerships, the power of photography grows exponentially. Rilling will share real life examples of how photography has been used to brand local food business and farmers markets, build producer brands and create dynamic partnerships between farmers markets and downtown businesses.

### Farmers Market Manager 101

Market managers are tasked with a variety of duties and responsibilities that will vary depending on market size, structure, and programs. Successful Market Manager Steve McCargar will provide insights, tips and trade secrets based on his years of experience running the Winneshiek Farmers Market in Decorah, Iowa, including recruiting and managing vendors, techniques to increase attendance, and managing chaos with calm.

### Health and Safety 101

Have you ever wondered if you need a certification or a license to sell this or if your product needs to be temperature controlled. Have you asked, can I sell this pie at the farmers market? We all care about the safety of our customers and want them coming back to purchase more. This is your opportunity to hear from the Department of Inspections and Appeals and have your questions answered.

### Making the Most of Your Farmers Market

With pressure from every direction to scale up market farming operations to meet the growing demand for local food, growers need to consider their goals, roles, capacity, and skills. Chris Blanchard will take you on an exploration of the challenges and opportunities related to expanding your market farm. Chris speaks from experience with all aspects of growing, marketing, farmers markets and other local food markets.

### Developing and Building Projects and Partners

Local food growers, tourism and economic develop directors, farmers markets, local food hubs and value added businesses are all part of the local food system. Friest has been working with partners and developing projects to expand Northeast Iowa's local food system for nearly two decades. Learn how and why you can maximize partnerships as she share some tips, tricks and ideas that help you partners with others to build your own local food system.

# COURSE SUMMARY

## SESSION 3

### FSMA and GroupGAP, What I need to Know

What is FSMA? What is GroupGAP? How does it affect my business? These food safety programs and certifications are here and will be affecting local food producers in Iowa. Jason Grimm, experienced local food grower, business manager and local food system expert with Iowa Valley RC&D, will provide the details and information you need to decide how these new rules and regulations will be affecting your business.

### Farmers Market Vending 101

Why do some market stands do better than others? Erik Sessions from Patchwork Green has been successfully selling at the farmers market for nearly two decades. Eric will pass on tips of the trade and answer questions to help producers get the most out of their stand so they can maximize the effort they put into growing their produce and their farm.

### Beyond the Market

The farmers market is a great way for local producers to get their foot in the door but it is also a jumping point for many businesses. Have you ever wondered how a grower moves from market to small business? Hear from The Iowa Food Hub and the Oneota Food Coop about how they operate, what they look for, and how they support local producers.

### Farmers Opportunity Panel

Did you know public and private partners has a wide variety of programs available for local food farmers and ranchers? This is your opportunity to hear from a diverse group of professionals who are looking to assist you in developing a successful farm. Professionals will provide an overview of their programs, cost share and loan opportunities, and technical assistance before answering questions in small group-round table discussions.

### Scaling Up to Fill the Plate

With pressure from every direction to scale up market farming operations to meet the growing demand for local food, growers need to consider their goals, roles, capacity, and skills. Chris Blanchard will take you on an exploration of the challenges and opportunities you face when expanding your market farm and help you understand how to overcome them.

# WILDER BUSINESS CENTER

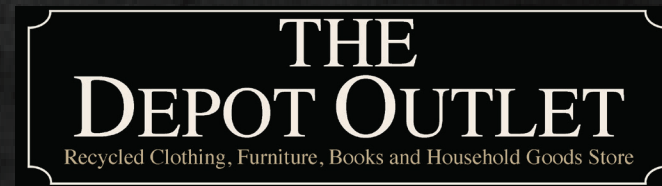
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## LODGING



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Convention & Visitor Bureau  
Phone: (563) 382-2023  
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