



Aitkin County Public Health's SHIP Program
PartnerSHIP News!

March 2024

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Aitkin, Itasca, Koochiching, Carlton, Cook, Lake, and St. Louis counties make up Healthy Northland.

Supported by the Minnesota Department of Health's Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP), Healthy Northland strives to make the healthy choice the easy choice for everyone in Northeastern Minnesota through collaborative and community-based policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change efforts.

[Visit Healthy Northlands Webpage](#)



March | 2024

Safe Routes to School in Esko:

A Collaborative Commitment to Active Living

**GET KIDS
MORE
ACTIVE** 

Students who start walking or biking to school benefit from **47 MORE MINUTES OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PER WEEK.**

Providing kids with a safe, convenient, and fun way to bike and walk to school is a vital safety measure with far-reaching benefits to a community's health and wellbeing. Safe Routes to School can reduce the risk of pedestrian injury by 44 percent. It can also alleviate vehicle congestion and improve air quality. And it helps foster an active lifestyle for kids—students who start walking or biking to school get an average of 47 more minutes of physical activity per week.

**Reduce the risk of
PEDESTRIAN INJURY BY
44 PERCENT** 

That's why Emily Morrison, Carlton County Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) Coordinator, is collaborating

[Read the March Newsletter](#)



AITKIN FARM FRESH BOXES

SUCCESS STORY



Riverwood's Reach with Aitkin Farm Fresh

*Editor: Hannah Colby, RD, LD, CLS
Aitkin County Public Health*

Riverwood Healthcare Center (Riverwood), with the support of the Aitkin Farmers Market Hub (AFM Hub) and Aitkin County Public Health's Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP), received a Local Food Purchasing Assistance (LFPA) grant with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA). The grant is supporting Riverwood to purchase local food to create Aitkin Farm Fresh boxes that are readily available to be distributed to individuals, particularly seniors. The primary goal of this grant is to source 100% of the food from local farms and distribute to underserved communities. "This new food program is offered under our Riverwood Connects community outreach umbrella along with Find Help and Food Rx, which we launched last year. Together with our community partners we are striving to address hunger and improve health for local community members," explains Rachel Johnson, population health program manager.

In March, Riverwood and the AFM Hub aggregated for their third consecutive month with each box featuring food from hyperlocal and nearby farms. "We always buy as locally as possible," says Allison Rian, Aitkin Farmers Market Hub manager. "So this grant, which requires food purchased be grown in Minnesota or boarding counties, was a good fit for us. We're grateful we can provide local food to local residents." This month's box featured: honey (Sorben Honey), maple syrup (Timer's Sugar Shack), brats (Righteous Oaks Farm), eggs (Josiah and Asher Nix -

Righteous Oaks Farm, Ole Lake Farm and AlliCat Farm), purple carrots (Food Farm), cabbage (Food Farm), flour (Ole Lake Farm) and wild rice (Master's Maples). A few items that make this a nutrient dense box are the flour, eggs and brats.

The flour is provided by Ole Lake Farm which is located in Aitkin, MN. Ole Lake Farm is home to farmers Keven and Debby Flowers. The turkey red whole wheat flour is a heirloom variety of hard red wheat that is prized by bakers. This flour includes the whole grain with nothing removed or added.

Whole-grain foods are good choices for a nutritious diet. Whole grains provide fiber, vitamins, minerals and other nutrients. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends that at least half of all the grains you eat are whole grains. Ole Lake Farm sells both turkey red whole wheat flour and rye flour.

The brats and eggs are provided by the kids at Righteous Oaks Farm which is a diverse, solar-powered small family farm. They are located on their century - family farm in southern Aitkin county. Eggs and brats are both good protein sources. It is important for individuals to consume protein every day. Daily protein intake plays a role in keeping your cells in good shape. Protein is also an important building block of bones, muscles, cartilage and skin. In fact, your hair and nails are comprised mostly of protein. Righteous Oaks Farm sells pure maple syrup, pastured broiler chickens, pastured pork, grass - fed beef, pastured eggs, brats, jams, jellies and pickles.

These nutrient dense foods are aggregated in boxes at Riverwood with the help of the Aitkin School District's Future Farmers of America (FFA) organization and volunteers from Riverwood's Auxiliary. Once the boxes are ready to be distributed, Riverwood partners with Aitkin County CARE and Angels of McGregor who distribute them across the county. Each organization receives a total of 30 boxes.

Last month, food insecurity was identified in the Palisade area and all 60 boxes were distributed by Aitkin County CARE. "It's clear that there is a need for food in our communities throughout the county," explains Dawn Harrison program director of outreach for Aitkin County CARE. "People are receptive and appreciative when we bring the food to where they are. When there are fresh vegetables especially, that's a real hit! There are several community members who are raising their grandchildren and have shared that these food boxes really make a positive difference in their lives."

The collaboration work among this multi - sector program is making a difference in the lives of our community members. Aitkin Farm Fresh connects farmers to local community members who would not normally have access to farm fresh produce, meats, and goods.

Amy M. Wyant, executive director of Aitkin County CARE, states "when several local entities collaborate on a project which serves our community

members throughout Aitkin County, we can and will continue to make a positive difference in people's lives and help them thrive."

The intent is to assist local farmers with procuring their food during the hardest times of the winter months and to assist food - insecure community members. Riverwood plans on offering the Aitkin Farm Fresh program during the winter months in 2025 as well. If MDA is able to secure additional funding, then there will be an opportunity to extend this program for an additional year beyond 2025.



Allison Rian (Aitkin Farmers Market Hub), Rachel Johnson (Riverwood Healthcare Center), and members from Aitkin School District's Future Farmers of America (FFA).



30 boxes aggregated for Aitkin Farm Fresh



Aitkin Farm Fresh



What's in this Box?

- Flour
- Honey
- 1/2 doz. Eggs
- Chicken Frames
- Wild Rice
- Dry Beans
- Maple Syrup
- Oatmeal

Riverwood Healthcare Center's Aitkin Farm Fresh Box Program

Market Box Food Rx



What's in this Box?

- Potatoes
- Carrots
- Cabbage
- Garlic
- Onions
- Clementine
- Green Onions
- Lettuce
- Yellow Onions
- Radishes

Riverwood's Healthcare Center Food Rx Market Box Program



SUPPORT

LOCAL FARMS &

shop seasonally.

**BEYOND
THE
TABLE**

2024 NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH
A CAMPAIGN BY
THE ACADEMY OF NUTRITION AND DIETETICS

#NationalNutritionMonth

AITKIN FARM TRAIL PASSPORT



EXPLORE LOCAL FARMS

Meet your Aitkin County local food farmers! Visit us at our onsite farm stands or at the Farmers Market to get this passport stamped.

The first 13 people with a full set of passport stamps will win a farm prize. Two ways to enter your finished passport:

1. Snap a photo of your completed stamped passport and email to: aitkinfarmtrail@gmail.com
2. Mail your completed stamped passport (or a copy) with your name and phone number to: Aitkin Farm Trail, 31213 292nd St., Aitkin, MN 56431.

QUESTIONS? email: aitkinfarmtrail@gmail.com

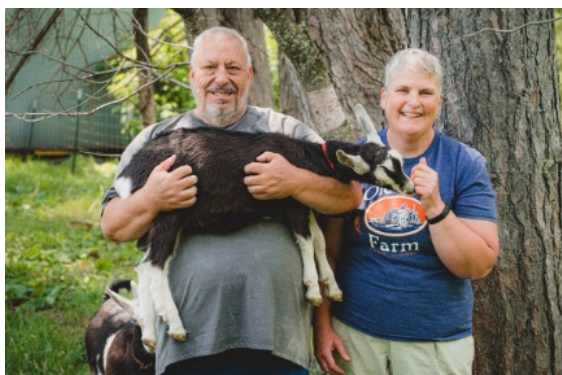
***TIP:** Check each farm's websites or call ahead to confirm hours of operation before visiting.



© 2023 Clear Lake Gardens

AITKIN FARM TRAIL PASSPORT

1. **Maple Ridge Produce**
Veggies, meat, gifts
218-232-1303
29555 380th Ave.
mapleridgeproduce.com
Find us: Onsite farm stand & Aitkin FM
2. **Ole Lake Farm**
Grains, goats, soap
218-927-4610
olelakefarm.com
Find us: Aitkin FM
3. **Righteous Oaks Farm**
Meat, poultry, veggies, syrup
218-927-1425
35372 295th St.
righteousoaksfarm.com
Find us: Onsite farm stand & Aitkin FM
4. **Clear Lake Gardens**
Veggies, flowers, syrup, mushrooms, wood, gifts
707-331-6850
31213 292nd St.
clearlakegardens.org
FB/IG: Clear Lake Gardens
Find us: Onsite farm stand
5. **Buck Hills Farm**
Bountiful harvest
763-537-4802
34312 330th Ave.
FB: Buck Hills Farm
Call ahead for app't & Aitkin FM
6. **Dove St. Greenhouse & Garden**
Plants, flowers, veggies
218-232-6935
By appt. only. Pls. call.
7. **Gilby's Nursery & Orchard**
Apples, trees, honey, syrup
218-670-1232
30069 State Hwy 210
gilbysorchard.com
Find us: Onsite farm stand
8. **Hurd Family Farm**
Eggs, veggies, mushrooms
218-927-4553
FB: Hurd Family Farm
By appt. only. Please call.
9. **Murphy's Grove**
Raw milk, chicken, ducks, gamebirds
651-470-4853
42777 430th Ave.
murphysgrove.com
By appt. only. Pls. call.
10. **River Bend Gardens**
Hot sauces, preserves, veggies, giftstones
612-210-6365
44622 Hwy. 169, Palisade
FB: River Bend Gardens
Find us: Onsite farm stand
11. **Chengwatana Community Farm**
Grass-fed beef, lamb, pork, chicken, eggs, veggies
218-332-4189
Find us: Aitkin FM
12. **Arden Acres Farm**
Grass-fed beef & chicken
218-329-0824
32257 450th St., Palisade
ardenacres.com
Call ahead for a tour
13. **Willow Sedge Farm**
Grass-fed beef, pork, chicken
218-670-0066
54852 Great River Rd., Palisade
janesfarm.com
Call ahead for appt.



Ole Lake Farm



©2020 Alice McCabe

Doubting Thomas Farm



WillowSedge Farm



The Food Farm



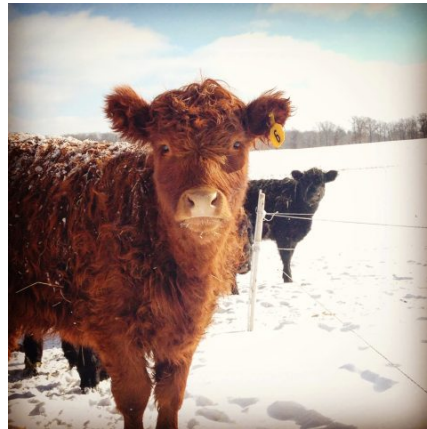
Aitkin Farmers Market Hub



Buck Hills Farm



Clear Lake Gardens



Hollister Family Farm



Righteous Oaks Farm



Ardent Acres Farm



Timber Sugar Shack



Sorben Honey



Hurd Family Farm



AlliCat Farm

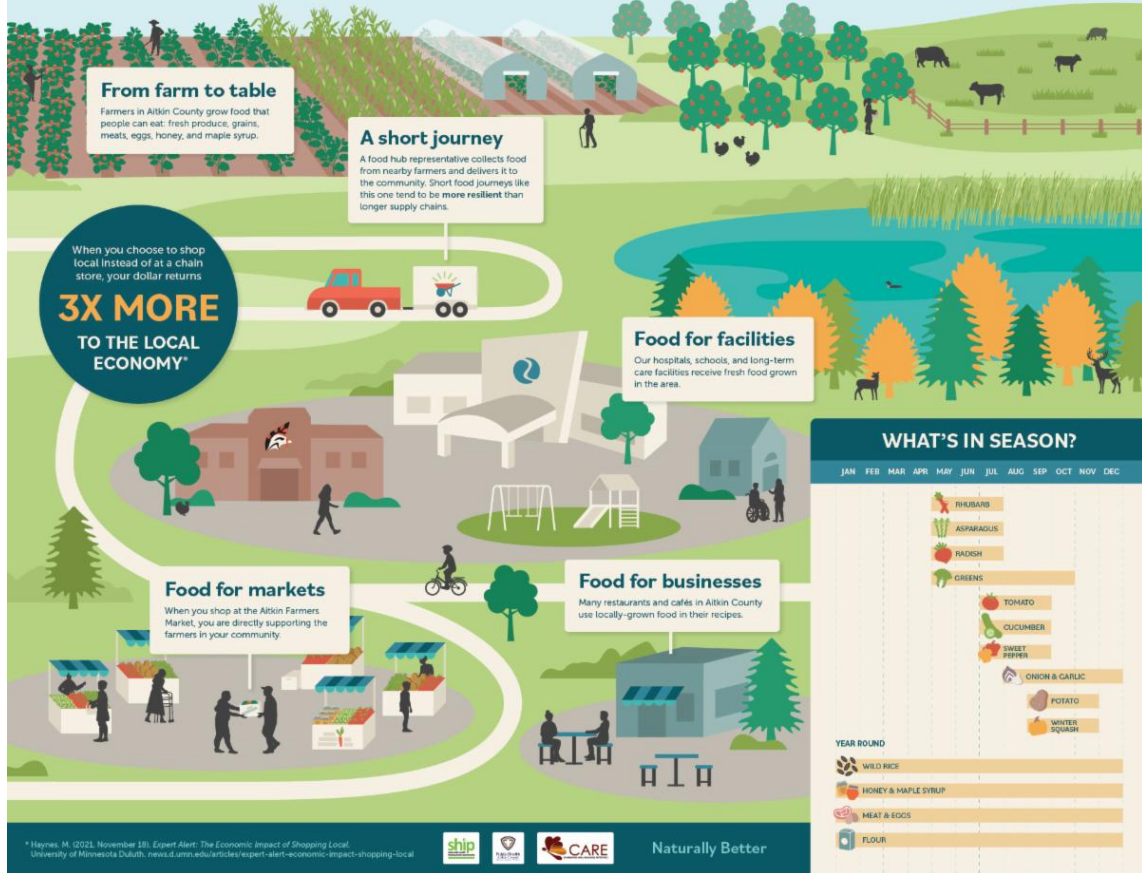
Aitkin County Food

KEEPS OUR COMMUNITIES THRIVING

Whether you're having lunch in the school cafeteria or dining in a local restaurant, your food may have been grown by your neighbors.

Serving Aitkin and beyond

With help from the Aitkin Food Hub, our farmers are connected to buyers in the community. Our hub is just one of many throughout Minnesota. When our local food system is strong, everyone benefits.



* Haynes, M. (2021, November 18). Expert Alert: The Economic Impact of Shopping Local. University of Minnesota Duluth. www.duluth.edu/articles/expert-alert-economic-impact-shopping-local



Naturally Better

2024 COMMUNITY PARTNER AWARDS
COMING SOON
STAY TUNED

www.aitkincountyship.org



SHIP STORY MAP

The Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) creates wellness across Minnesota's communities through community-driven, evidence-based, and equity-focused programs that tackle the root causes of chronic diseases.

The image above and the link below will take you to the storymap to explore work across Minnesota.

Statewide Health Improvement Partnership



Aitkin County Public Health | 204 1st Street NW, Aitkin, MN 56431

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