

# Input Needed for Local Food and Farm Plan

What are the obstacles that prevent Iowa from having a strong local and regional food business sector? What short- and long-term strategies could be used to reduce or eliminate those obstacles?

Participants at a June 24 working session with the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture discussed obstacles in 10 different sectors of Iowa's local and regional food system and suggested possible strategies to address them. Here are drafts of what was discussed, by sector:

- [Crop Production](#) [all plant-based production systems]
- [Livestock Production](#) [all animal-based production systems]
- [Processing](#) [plant- and animal-based products including meat, poultry, dairy, vegetables, etc.]
- [Distribution and Aggregation](#) [moving food from the farm gate to buyers through various market channels]
- [Financial Assistance](#) [grants and loans used to help support farmers and other business operations to produce, add value to, or deliver food products]
- [Marketing and Market Venues](#) [selling at all types of markets including farmers markets, food service, retail, colleges, hospitals, etc]
- [Food Safety and Other Regulations](#) [state and federal regulations that include food safety, processing, labeling, procurement, production quotas, etc.]
- [Beginning and Underserved Farmers](#) [people who wish to begin farming or return to farming, which would include women, Latinos, African Americans and other minority populations]
- [Planning: Roads, Land and Building Use](#) [effective planning for and use of roads, buildings and farmland to support a local food system]
- [Consumers](#) [What prevents consumers from buying local foods? What would influence them to buy more local foods?]

The Leopold Center is currently gathering information from various stakeholder groups at meetings, listening sessions, and surveys. More information can be found at: [www.leopold.iastate.edu/foodandfarmplan.html](http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/foodandfarmplan.html).

The Iowa Legislature required the Leopold Center to prepare a local food and farm plan containing policy and funding recommendations for supporting and expanding local food systems and for assessing and overcoming obstacles necessary to increase locally grown food production. The plan is to be submitted to the general assembly by January 10, 2011.