From: director@1000friendsofiowa.org
Sent: Tuesday, November 24, 2009 5:50 PM
To: ATR-Agricultural Workshops <agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov>
Subject: Input on Food System

I am writing as the Executive Director of 1000 Friends of Iowa. We have over 400 members throughout the state and our mission is to support responsible land use. Included in this mission is farmland protection and land stewardship. We work to revitalize communities and the local food system is certainly a part of this. Over 80% of the food that we eat in Iowa is brought into the state. We have world-renown soil and yet we use it largely to grow feed-crops for pigs and cattle, often shipping it out of state. We are working to change this to some degree, and are currently collaborting on a project to work with farmers to grow more food that will be purchased and consumed locally. We are waiting to hear on funding from the USDA to plan a food security project that includes 13 organizations collaborating to address the food system in central Iowa (as a start).

Another challenge in Iowa is keeping local grocery stores open in rural areas. The project we are proposing would address this with distribution of locally grown products/food to identified areas through the existing Iowa Food Cooperative. Lack of grocery stores is a challenge for many rural Iowans and their ability to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables can be very limited.

Thank you for the chance to have input.

Linda Gobberdiel
Executive Director
1000 Friends of Iowa
3850 Merle Hay Road, #605
Des Moines, Iowa 50310
515-288-5364
director@1000friendsofiowa.org