



Kane County - Aug. 1, 2013



GROWING FOR KANE

HEALTH - ECONOMY - FRESH FOOD

HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kane County Health Department
Kane County Development + Community Services Department



The Health Impact Assessment (HIA) report demonstrates there is considerable support in the research, literature, and business and resident surveys for creation of a new policy and program that will have positive economic and health impacts for residents and will stimulate local food production. As a result, a new Food and Farm Ordinance entitled, "Growing for Kane" is recommended to the Kane County Board for adoption. The new policy and program will help to address the county's growing obesity issues and low rates of fruit and vegetable consumption that affect health. This is in line with goals from the Kane County 2040 Plan, Community Health Improvement Plan, and Fit Kids 2020 Plan. It will also help retain and attract new producers of fruits, vegetables, meats and dairy.

Evidence shows that increasing local production of fruits, vegetables, meats, and dairy in the county will have a positive impact on health.

-  Residents who have access to fresh produce will purchase and consume it.
-  There is a demand for fresh produce, based on results from Link usage at farmers markets located in areas with vulnerable populations.
-  There will be an increase in jobs and a boost to the local economy if more fruits and vegetables for human consumption are grown in Kane County.
-  There is a strong positive relationship between income and better health outcomes.
-  Local stakeholders support the plan based on responses from several surveys.

Table 1 HIA REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Result
Kane County should create and pass a separate, sister ordinance instead of amending the current ordinance 01-67 by Fall, 2013.	Keeps current program and its history intact, demonstrates the past success and desire to continue it. Sister ordinance will allow for more flexibility in funding.
Under the new ordinance, Kane County will offer as appropriate perpetual and term easements; leases of public land, along with funding and incentives, to support retention of existing producers; create more scattered-site and smaller farms transitioning to producing fruits and vegetables.	Secures long term use of the land for food production giving the farmer and the community commitment to local food.
Kane County should work with Northern Illinois Food Bank (NIFB) and Kane County Farm Bureau to study the feasibility of locating a food hub by June, 2014.	Farmers have motivation to grow more produce with centralized cleaning, packaging and distribution available off farm.
The Farm Bureau should assist those farmers who apply to sell produce, meats and dairy for local consumption with resources and partnership such as Meet the Buyer events and other linkage programs.	More healthy produce and protein is available for Kane County residents, and increases Kane County farmers' earnings potential when paired with food hub.
The Farm Bureau and Kane County should participate in linking procuring institutions such as NIFB and schools with local growers for pre-season contracts.	Ensures vulnerable population has access to fresh produce purchased on their behalf through the food bank or local schools.
The ordinance should allow participating farms to be located in all areas of Kane County and be of any size.	Brings the products to the areas that most need them and spur economic activity countywide.
The Farm Bureau should lead the discussion of creating a branding campaign "Grown in Kane" by June, 2014.	Helps farmers market their goods and encourages local businesses to purchase their products.
The Kane County Health Department should lead a multi-department review of current policies and regulations relating to local food production by June, 2014.	Determines if any can be changed, updated, or removed to better support local food production.

Through the use of HIA, Kane County examined what the health impacts would be if an amendment to the current ordinance was approved, increasing the number of farms who produce fruits, vegetables, meats, and dairy for human consumption. HIA looks at current health indicators and makes predictions on the potential impacts of the pending decision. In this report, the HIA was used to help create a new ordinance. In the process, the HIA project team examined data collected through surveys, literature review of published reports and research analyses, and expert local stakeholder input to guide the creation of a new ordinance, based on the findings of the data assessment.



The economic portion of this report shows that by adding approximately 1,000 acres of fruit and vegetable production to the already existing base of specialty crops grown in Kane County, more than \$7 million dollars and 103 jobs will be added each year to the county's overall economy and will support the regional market. The retail and institutional markets for locally grown food include farmers' markets; local schools; corner stores; restaurants; grocers; Northern Illinois Food Bank and the pantries it serves.

Kane County Farm Bureau leadership and local producers support a change in policy that allows farming on all size parcels in all parts of the county.

Encouraging urban agriculture is indicated among a list of possible changes to government programs and policies that would make local food production more feasible according to farm bureau members and current food producers. Use of term agreements, tax credits, leases, and other incentives will help attract new people to farming while retaining existing vegetable and food producers through supporting the scaling up of their operations. Furthermore, the evidence demonstrates links between

contact with nature (including gardens), urban green infrastructure, and improvement in overall health and mental well-being.

To promote these opportunities, Kane County should create the Growing for Kane Program which may fund temporary or permanent easements or restrictions for a term of years. Leasing opportunities or cooperative contractual arrangements by governmental entities or private landowners may also be offered to persons seeking to utilize local production and marketing of locally grown food products, including use of greenhouses or similar facilities, regardless of location within Kane County. See Table 2 for the proposed policies for the program.

Table 2 PROPOSED GROWING FOR KANE POLICIES

- + Use of term easements and possible financial assistance to the current use of perpetual agreements (i.e. agreements with property owners) to grow fresh produce, meats, and dairy for local consumption
- + Prioritize farms that grow fresh produce, meats, and dairy for local consumption including but not limited to farmers markets, hospitals, schools and other institutions, restaurants, food suppliers and home consumption
- + Include farms of varying sizes and in rural and urban areas throughout the county
- + Coordinate pre-season contracts or other agreements to grow for Northern Illinois Food Bank for percentage of product grown and distributed to county's vulnerable population

Table 3 SUMMARY IMPACTS TABLE

Health Outcome	Impact	Quality of Evidence
Social + Emotional Wellness		
Life Expectancy		
Increase Attention In School/Child Care		
Obesity Rate		
Chronic Disease Rate		
Disparities w/ Vulnerable Population		



Significant means it affects a large number of people in the county and reaches vulnerable populations which have health disparities. Quality of evidence refers to how much data was found to support the research on the health outcome. High means there is substantial evidence located to support the finding.

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Partners + Funding

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Partners in this HIA include Kane County Agriculture Committee (T.R. Smith, Chairman), the Kane County Farmland Protection Commission, the American Farmland Trust, Kane County Farm Bureau, Northern Illinois Food Bank and an interdisciplinary group of staff from the county departments of Development & Community Services and Health.

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To learn more about Health Impact Assessment and to view the complete report visit:

www.kanehealth.com/hia.htm

