

**RECOMMENDATIONS & STATUS REPORT
THE IOWA FOOD POLICY COUNCIL**

**To
Governor Thomas J. Vilsack
Lt. Governor Sally Pederson**

JANUARY 2003

FOOD SECURITY DIVISION

The following outlines new recommendations from The Iowa Food Policy Council (IFPC) in 2002-2003 in addition to 2001 recommendations and their current implementation status. The recommendations have been grouped under major action areas which coincide with the US Action Plan on Food Security.¹

I. ECONOMIC SECURITY AND POLICY ENVIRONMENT

Food security depends on the creation of an environment-economic, political, and social-that enables individuals to achieve food security.

Statewide Food Security Direction/Coordination

- **The IFPC recommends the State of Iowa create a position of a Statewide Food Security Director.**

2002-2003

The IFPC believes the position of a State Food Security Director is especially important in 2002-2003 with the emphasis on food security from the perspective of food safety for the entire population. We recommend that with the monies being funneled to Iowa for food safety and security in bioterrorism funding, a Statewide Food Security Director position be created.

Since this new “food security” has a broader meaning under the guise of food safety, we believe that the concept of food security should include both the old (food adequacy/access) and the new (food safety as related to bioterrorism) in its definition and in actions taken in Iowa. The US government defines Food Security as “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. Food security includes at a minimum: 1) the ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, and 2) an assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways.”² This definition encompasses both concepts of food access and food safety/disaster preparedness in food security. This natural synergy should be built upon by the State of Iowa in the creation of a Food Security Director position.

With this current emphasis on food security, the IFPC believes the opportunity is here for the creation of a director’s position on a statewide basis. But, it is imperative this position deal with both the safety and the adequacy/access issues that food security implies. After all, if a food safety catastrophe strikes the state, the most food insecure Iowans will be those most likely hurt the soonest. In addition, it appears having a statewide food security director is a natural for the state that is the “breadbasket of the world”.

We believe this full time position would best be housed in the Department of Public Health. The Food Security Director would strengthen two areas within IDPH including the research and education role within the Bureau of Nutrition of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program within the Bureau of Nutrition. This position would also provide valuable expertise to the Office of Disease Epidemiology and Disaster Preparedness regarding the safety of Iowa’s food and water supplies. An additional role of the Food Security Director would be to increase the communication among food assistance programs administered by the Department of Land Stewardship, Department of Inspections and Appeals, Department of Human Services, Department of Education, and Department of Public Health.

¹ A joint effort of the sub-Cabinet level Interagency Working Group on Food Security and the non-governmental Food Security Advisory Committee of the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development Issued in 1999.

² See Life Sciences Research Organization, *Core Indicators of Nutritional Status for Difficult-to-Sample Populations*, 120 J. NUTRITION 1559, 1559 (Suppl. 1990).

2001

This position was recommended in 2001 but was not created.

- **The IFPC recommends the Governor form an Inter-Agency Food Security Task Force, functioning as a subcommittee of the IFPC, made up of representatives of all state funded or administered programs connected to food security, hunger, nutrition and food safety.**

2001

The taskforce was formed in the fall of 2001 and has had 4 meetings. Twenty-three agency members were invited to participate. Six IFPC members also sit on the task force. The first meeting allowed for everyone to understand the many different food programs in Iowa, how they operate, whom they affect, and how they may be potentially coordinated. The overriding goal of the task force is to help identify food needs of Iowans and how these needs can be better met. A survey was completed with the task force in the late fall 2001 to look at perceived needs of the task force member programs and the people they serve. This survey was analyzed, discussed and used to make recommendations for 2002-2003.

- **The IFPC recommends the Governor continue the Inter-Agency Food Security Task Force, as a subcommittee of the IFPC, to continue to analyze Iowa's food needs and to determine possible solutions to these needs through better programming, coordination, outreach, etc.**

2002-2003

The IFPC believes this task force should continue to operate to analyze food security needs of Iowans, to determine how needs can be better met with current programs, and to determine what new areas need to be investigated by the state of Iowa. The Inter-Agency Food Security Task Force will also coordinate efforts with the Farm Bill Working Group looking at the Nutrition Title set up within state government. One individual sits on both the IFPC Food Security task force and the Farm Bill Working Group and will act as a liaison between the groups. In addition, the IFPC will receive the monthly reports of the Farm Bill Working Group.

Economic Support

- **The IFPC recommends DHS take measures to extend transitional food stamp benefits to families leaving TANF (Family Investment Program [FIP] in Iowa) for 5 months as allowed in the 2002 Farm Bill legislation.**

2002-2003

The long-term goal of FIP is to help families become self-sufficient. This is often difficult when both monthly cash payments and food stamps are lost at the same time. Research in Iowa showed that 47% of Iowa families had incomes below poverty 8-12 months after leaving FIP. The benefit of continued food stamps through this transitional period of 5 months, which the food stamp program regulations allows in the new 2002 farm bill, would be extremely helpful to the families leaving FIP as they try to become self-sufficient.

In addition to providing Iowa families with needed food, the state of Iowa would also be improving the Iowa economy by enforcing this regulation. There are significant food stamp dollars currently being lost to the Iowa economy which can be added by the addition of this transitional food stamp benefits to Iowa families. The costs to the state of adding this economic support to families is the minimal programming cost to update the computer system to send the food stamps to recipients for the additional 5 months.

Anti-Hunger Network

- **The IFPC recommends that the State of Iowa support the creation of a statewide Anti-Hunger Network as outlined in the Healthy Iowans 2010 report.**

2002-2003

Advocacy to affect policy and action in the State of Iowa is extremely important if we are to increase the number of Iowans who always have access to safe food. The development of an anti-hunger network will help in advocacy and action at both the local and state level. The Director of Food Security (recommended position above) would act as the linkage between this private network and state programs trying to provide safe, nutritional food to all Iowans. The development of regional workshops (see research and education below) will assist in the development of the network.

II. RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

Food Security Reports (Assessment & Analysis)

- **The IFPC recommends the development of annual Iowa Food Security Reports for the State of Iowa to continue food security assessment, analysis, and policy recommendations on a regular basis.**

2002-2003

The IFPC recommends the continuation on an annual basis of several initial reports which were completed in 2002 (as recommended in 2001).

An Iowa Food Security Report Card should continue to be funded and completed on an annual basis. This report can give yearly food security benchmarks in the state. The funding source for the 2002-2003 report (recommended in 2001) was Food Stamp Nutrition Education dollars. It is not known at this time if this federal funding source will continue to be available for this endeavor. If not, other sources should be identified.

In addition to the development of the report card, a policy implication/recommendation report (continuation and expansion of the “Hunger in Iowa” report below) should be completed by the Director of Food Security (position recommended above) in conjunction with the IFPC.

Another assessment potential is the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) Community Health Needs Assessment and Health Improvement Plan. This assessment and planning tool will encourage County Boards of Health (BOH) to assess food security and hunger within their communities. This revised tool will be implemented in August 2003 and comprehensive county reports will be available via the IDPH website in the spring of 2005. This will be another avenue for collecting food security data for analysis if individual county BOH understand the importance of collecting the data (see awareness below). The IDPH is also discussing the opportunity to pilot test the Community Food Security Assessment Toolkit developed by the US Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service with a local Board of Health.

2001

The Iowa Food Security Report Card, funded through the IDPH, Bureau of Nutrition (using Food Stamp Nutrition Education dollars) accomplished this recommendation for 2002. Iowa State University developed the first Iowa Food Security Report Card. The objective of the Iowa Food Security Report Card was to develop Iowa indicators of household and community food security. These indicators can now be benchmarked in both counties and statewide to assess and monitor food security in Iowa. The project employed a two-part strategy. First, food security studies were reviewed and analyzed. Next, counties were selected to implement the project. Focus groups were held in Decatur, Monroe, Polk and Scott counties. A project priority was to develop methodologies that could be replicated in local communities. Surveys were distributed in food pantries in each of the counties. A total of 569 completed surveys were received. The researchers identified common issues faced by low-income respondents about their food situation including the response to eat less food or lower quality food when resources become limited, paying bills often becomes a priority over purchasing food, public transportation is inconvenient and expensive, social support is a critical factor in assuring low-income families have adequate food. See appendix A for the Executive Summary.

A second report from the Iowa State University Family Nutrition Program Community Food Assessment Project examined two rural counties and two urban neighborhoods in Iowa to learn the nature and extent of the impact of food deserts on vulnerable populations. Focus groups consisting of community leaders and low-income residents were conducted in each of the communities. The goal of the focus groups was to find out about the community food supply and how elderly and low-income populations are accessing affordable and health foods. Focus group findings suggest that both rural and urban low-income populations shop multiple stores to find affordable foods. Rural participants travel an average 22 minutes to a grocery store; urban participants travel and average almost 18 minutes. Transportation was the greatest barrier to accessing affordable foods. Civic structures and personal connections are significant indicators of community food security.

Finally, the IFPC was also involved in the production of the 2002 report “Hunger in Iowa” for the Iowa Legislature which did an initial analysis looking at hunger in Iowa, how programs in Iowa are addressing hunger, and recommendations for the future. This is the first report available on the status of hunger and food insecurity in Iowa and has been widely circulated. See Appendix B for the report.

Increasing Awareness of Food Security

- **The IFPC recommends that the State of Iowa and the Governor’s office support and endorse regional public workshops on food security to increase public knowledge of the synergies of food security/agriculture/health/economic issues.**

2002-2003

The Food Security Report Card grant, funded with Food Stamp Nutrition Education funds and awarded to Iowa State University (above) has funding for regional workshops to be conducted following the issuance of the first report card in the fall of 2002. The governor’s endorsement and involvement in these regional workshops will greatly increase public awareness and interest in the conferences. Again, the Food Security Director could provide the valuable linkage between the many players from both the state and local level (both governmental and private) dealing with the issues of food, agriculture, health, and economics. These conferences are being planned regionally to make them a “hands on” experience involving the local citizens (i.e.: boards of supervisors/boards of health discussed below). Regional workshops will also increase the opportunity to develop a statewide Anti-hunger network (above).

2001

Several presentations on food insecurity and hunger in Iowa were provided to the Iowa Dietetic Association, Iowa State University Cooperative Extension, Iowa Public Health Association, American Dietetic Association Food and Nutrition Conference and Exhibition, Society for Nutrition Education, Association of State and Territorial Public Health Nutrition Directors, and National WIC Association by staff of both the IFPC and Iowa Department of Public Health during the past year.

- **The IFPC recommends that the State of Iowa support the education of County Boards of Supervisors (BOS) and County Boards of Health (BOH) on issues of food policy (i.e.: food security) and its synergy to health, economic and agricultural policy through information/action seminars at BOS/BOH state meetings.**

2002-2003

Local county leaders are critical links in the success of food programs at the local level. County citizens would benefit greatly from county leaders having a good understanding of food policy and food programs and the leader’s responsibilities toward them. The connection of food policy to health, economic and agricultural policy is often not understood at the local level and therefore unfortunately often ignored. To increase county leader’s involvement, education is the necessary first step. IFPC recommends presentations at BOS and BOH state meetings. This again would be a function of the Director of Food Security. In addition, BOS and BOH should be involved in the regional food security meetings (discussed above) and in the collection of food security data for the Community Health Needs Assessment (discussed above).

IV. SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Local Food Systems

- **The IFPC recommends that the State of Iowa expand and coordinate nutrition education programs in Iowa from the Iowa Nutrition Network (INN), Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS), IDEA, Iowa Extension, and Iowa Network for Community Agriculture (INCA) to include information on the value of locally grown foods and community gardening.**

2002-2003

There are currently 8 gardening projects in Iowa BASICS (Building and Strengthening Iowa Community Support for Nutrition and Physical Activity) funded with Food Stamp Nutrition Education dollars. These are good programs that should be expanded and publicized through the media to increase exposure and understanding of local food systems by Iowa citizens. INCA and the Sustainable and Community Based Agriculture Working Group are developing a brochure on access to fresh, locally grown foods. This should be coordinated with INN efforts. In addition, it is recommended that Iowa

Extension use programs such as master gardeners to reach out to low income Iowans to teach and encourage them to engage in organic vegetable gardening to improve their food security.

V. FOOD SECURITY SAFETY NET

Overall Coordination

- **The IFPC recommends the State of Iowa better coordinate the application process for existing food and nutrition services.**

2002-2003

The coordination, streamlining and simplifying of state application procedures for all food and nutrition related aid would be a great benefit to Iowa citizens. Currently, to qualify for food assistance, citizens must complete applications which are often difficult and different for each program. Often this leads to citizens (and the state) not receiving the benefits for which they are entitled. For example, the USDA just reported that only 61% of those eligible for food stamps in Iowa actually receive them. This means lost benefits for needy Iowans in addition to lost economic dollars for the state. Coordination should also occur with other public assistance programs, for example, the new farm bill includes state options for food and nutrition programs to align to Medicaid and TANF eligibility questions.

This recommendation of application coordination is consistent with USDA messages to the states to coordinate program applications. The IFPC suggests that Iowa look at what other states have done towards streamlining and joint applications.

A full time Income Maintenance Worker 6 in the Division of Financial Health & Work Support is needed to accomplish this goal. This position could be partially funded by federal food stamp administrative dollars. In addition, the new Food Security Director (recommended above) should also be involved in coordination between various state departments.

2001

This recommendation was made in 2001 but was not accomplished due to lack of personnel.

- **The IFPC recommends the State of Iowa better coordinate transportation services between senior nutrition and school food programs.**

2002-2003

Coordination can also occur with senior nutrition programs and school food programs. The IFPC recommends that several transportation pilot programs be implemented and analyzed for feasibility in the state of Iowa. For example, could transportation buses picking up the elderly for noon lunches also pick up kindergarteners for summer feeding programs in rural areas? Or could school buses be used to deliver meals to the elderly when children are being taken home?

- **The IFPC recommends the State of Iowa continue efforts to better harmonize nutrition education messages by requiring all food/health related state programs use the same coordinated message of “Pick a Better Snack” which promotes the consumption of more fruits and vegetables.**

2002-2003

The Iowa Nutrition Network (INN) works to promote a healthy diet and lifelong physical activity. The first collaborative nutrition education message (community coalitions, schools, retailers, public agencies, area agencies on aging, etc.) is “Pick a Better Snack,” a social marketing campaign which promotes eating more fruits and vegetables as snacks. With this effort, funded by USDA, it is hoped that Iowans continue to receive the same message over and over throughout their life span. This campaign is based on research showing that individuals who eat the recommended 5 servings of fruits and vegetables do so because of their snacking habits. This current effort is showing impact in Iowa’s schools and among the elderly.

The Food Security Director position would be the logical link to work with the Network and help agencies and programs coordinate this message throughout Iowa. The new USDA free fruit and vegetable pilot program to be implemented in 25 Iowa schools this year is an example of how this message can be coordinated with another program to reach the children of Iowa.

Food Stamp Program

- **The IFPC recommends the State of Iowa support the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) with adequate resources to provide the best service to Iowans by taking full advantage of all optional provisions allowed in the Food Stamp Program in both previous regulations and in the new 2002 Farm Bill reauthorization.**

2002-2003

There are many implementation, simplification, and streamlining procedures which the federal regulations allow Iowa to use with regard to the food stamp program. These procedures, if implemented, would help more Iowans know about their potential eligibility for the program in addition to making it simpler for them to make application.

Examples of optional provisions DHS should employ are:

- treatment of legally obligated child support payments to non-household members as income exclusions;
 - use of the new simplified definition of income;
 - simplification of housing cost determination;
 - simplification of deduction determination;
 - simplification of definition of resources;
 - extension of semi-annual reporting of changes to all households not exempt.
- **The IFPC recommends DHS improve service to seniors in Iowa by taking advantage of all special senior provisions allowed in the food stamp regulations that would increase participation of eligible seniors.**

2002-2003

There are a significant number of Iowa Seniors who could participate in the Food Stamp Program, but are not. With improved, targeted service, participation of this very vulnerable population in Iowa could improve dramatically. Examples of special senior rules which IFPC recommends DHS adopt are:

- special senior household definition rules;
 - special eligibility for elderly residents of federally subsidized institutions or certain nonprofit group living arrangements;
 - different senior income tests (i.e.: \$3000 in assets);
 - joint processing of SSI and food stamp applications for seniors;
 - 24 month certification period for seniors;
 - simplified senior application form (addressed above including staff requirement).
- **The IFPC recommends the Governor's Office and DHS support efforts to expand outreach regarding the food stamp to Iowa citizens.**

2002-2003

The Iowa food stamp program has neither outreach activities nor an outreach plan. In order to provide the program to needy Iowans who qualify, it is imperative more outreach be done by DHS. At the very least, posters (which are available free from USDA) should be in all locations that serve low income Iowans around the state. In addition, development and distribution of a general brochure about the Iowa program and how to apply should be implemented.

In addition, IFPC recommends DHS provide food stamp program outreach to seniors that de-links welfare with food stamps, explains nutrition benefits of food stamps, and explains the simpler application procedure for seniors (recommended above). Also needed for seniors is food stamp staff available on occasion at senior centers and social security centers for application completion at these centers.

Public or private nonprofit organizations should be supported by DHS and the Governor's office in efforts to apply for USDA competitive grants awarded yearly to improve access to the food stamp program in Iowa. Iowa has never applied nor received one of these grants.

- **The IFPC recommends DHS modify the food stamp application making it shorter and simpler to read.**

2002-2003

The IFPC believes that simplification of the food stamp application is possible based on the 2002 Farm Bill legislation aimed at simplifying the application procedure. Other states have been successful in this endeavor and the IFPC believes Iowa can be also. Once implemented, the simplified application will not only benefit the food stamp applicant, but will equally benefit DHS staff by taking less time and work in processing.

Again, DHS staffing is an issue to complete this application modification. However, it is hoped the position to coordinate applications across programs (discussed above) could help in this endeavor. Another option is to use a law student intern to work on this project.

2001

This recommendation was made in 2001, but the application was not changed. DHS stated the length (10 pages) and language level (12th grade) are necessary to meet FNS regulations. With regulation changes in the 2002 Farm Bill, this should no longer be an issue.

- **The IFPC recommends that DHS establish categorical eligibility between the food stamp and the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program allowing the state to change its cash program rule to establish better limits in both TANF cash assistance and the Food Stamp Program.**

2001

It was stated in a letter from J. Rasmussen (7/31/01) that expanding categorical eligibility for food stamps may be possible. It is not determined if this has been done. The IFPC supports this adoption.

- **The IFPC recommends that DHS take full advantage of federal allowances that allow food stamp recipients to own a reliable car and still be eligible for food stamps.**

2002-2003

DHS is currently trying to increase the vehicle allowance to help Iowa's working families have reliable transportation. They understand the extremely difficult situation of Iowa families with the current Iowa car allowance. The IFPC recommends that the Governor's office endorse and support DHS in this effort to allow families to have a reliable car for work while receiving food stamps.

2001

The Iowa Food Stamp Program did not change the vehicle allowance in 2001 due to lack of support for this change.

- **The IFPC recommends DHS extend business hours for working poor.**

2001

DHS currently allows telephone interviews scheduled around working hours. To date, few clients have taken advantage of this service. The IFPC applauds this service and suggests that it needs to be publicized to more clients.

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

- **The IFPC recommends that IDALS expand the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) to include farm-stands, orchards, and other forms of on-farm direct marketing as allowed under existing USDA rules.**

2002-2003

The IFPC believes this is a very important issue which the state should pursue. By allowing farm-stands, orchards, and other forms of on-farm direct marketing for WIC participants, it would allow for both increased access to healthy food for WIC clients and economic assistance to Iowa farmers who are raising non traditional agricultural crops.

School Food Programs

- **The IFPC recommends that the Iowa Department of Education (DOE) and IDPH identify and seek funds to undertake a study in Iowa which collects data, analyzes policy implications, and makes recommendations for future**

action regarding the interrelationship of the obesity epidemic in children, the increasingly poor eating habits of children and increasing appearance of competitive foods in schools.

2002-2003

Health and obesity: The US surgeon General has stated there is an epidemic of obesity in our children. In 1999, an estimated 13 percent of children aged 6-11 years and 14 percent adolescents aged 12-19 years were overweight. “Today there is nearly twice as many overweight children and almost three times as many overweight adolescents as there were in 1980.” In Iowa, 31.9% of school children describe themselves as overweight. Type II Diabetes incidence in children was 2-4 percent of child diabetics in 1992. In just 2 years, the incidence had quadrupled to 16 percent, likely due to the increase in obesity. Overweight children are more likely to become overweight adults leading to more health problems.

Both diet and inactivity are directly implicated in the obesity epidemic. Consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks is associated with obesity in children, osteoporosis, tooth decay, heart disease, and kidney stones.

Children’s Eating and Exercise Habits: Only 2 percent of school-aged children meet the serving recommendations for all five major groups of the Food Guide Pyramid. Children are heavy consumers of soda. Fifty-six percent of 8 year olds to 83 percent of 14 year old boys consume soda every day. In Iowa only 18.9% of school children report they eat 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables. Only 14% of Iowa school children report attending a daily physical education class.

Competitive foods: Foods (i.e. vending machine pop and snack bar candy), which compete during the day with good foods served by the school food programs, are competitive foods. According to USDA, “Competitive foods undermine the nutrition integrity of the [school food] programs and discourage participation.” USDA believes that competitive foods are one of the greatest culprits to children’s poor diets and increasing health concerns. Iowa has no policy regarding any restrictions on competitive foods.

Many schools have “pouring rights” contracts where schools contract with soft drink companies, who have the goal of creating brand loyalty “among young people who have a lifetime of soft drink purchases ahead of them”. Thirty-eight percent of elementary schools, 50.4 percent of middle schools, and 71.9 percent of senior high schools have a contract that gives a company rights to sell soft drinks to children at the school.

The interrelationship of child health, child eating habits, and competitive foods in schools is a very large concern the IFPC believes needs to be investigated and addressed in Iowa. This study should be correlated with the fruit and vegetable pilot program in 25 Iowa schools, the Team Nutrition Program, the Action for Healthy Kids Program, and the Obesity initiative in the IDPH.

- **The IFPC is concerned with the change this year in Iowa legislation that eliminated the mandate that schools must provide school breakfasts. The Council recommends that the State monitor participation levels collected by DOE and take action if participation falls.**

2002-2003

Research has shown that children who participate in the School Breakfast Program have “significantly higher standardized achievement test scores than eligible non-participants”. They also have significantly reduced absence and tardiness rates. The program does make a difference. But, one of the problems encounter by smaller schools in Iowa is the labor cost of providing the program for only a few children. New research from USDA is showing that universal breakfasts (free breakfast given to all children no matter what their family income) are having great results. Iowa schools should be encouraged to consider this option. In addition, innovative ways of outreach (to enroll more children in the program) and innovative ways of delivery with lower labor costs (i.e.: give a sack breakfast on the bus) need to be encouraged in Iowa to increase participation in this valuable program.

Senior Nutrition Programs

- **The IFPC recommends that IDALS expand the Senior Farmer’s Market Coupon Program through identifying adequate funding to administer this program.**

2002-2003

This has been a very successful senior program which has 3 goals:

- to encourage healthy eating habits through the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables;
- to encourage seniors to purchase directly from the farmer;
- to support local farmers who participate in the program.

The SFMNP was offered for the first time in Iowa in the summer of 2001. To participate, seniors must be >60 years and have an income less than 185% poverty level. In 2002, 15,000 seniors received \$28 in coupons to purchase fruits and vegetables from local farmers. Iowa received \$337,200 in federal funds for the food coupons and \$114,000 in federal specialty crop grant funds to administer the program.

In 2003 there are more seniors who would like to participate. An ongoing source of state administrative dollars needs to be identified and used on an ongoing basis to expand this program which helps not only low income seniors receive healthy foods, but also helps the local farm economy with dollars to farmers who are raising non traditional diverse crops such as vegetables and fruit.

Innovative programs, such as that developed in Maine, where CSA farmers receive dollars at the beginning of the growing season to provide fruits and vegetables to seniors throughout the summer need to be investigated and piloted in Iowa.

2001

Money was secured in 2001 as recommended to administer this very successful program.

- **The IFPC recommends that the State of Iowa Office of Volunteerism specifically increase the recruitment of volunteers for senior nutrition programs**

2002-2003

One of the biggest concerns of senior nutrition programs is the recruitment of volunteers who are integral to the workings of all programs. The State needs to encourage businesses to provide volunteer opportunities for their employees in senior nutrition programs. For example, in one community, a business allows a rotating group of employees to deliver home delivered meals. Promotion of these activities by the state (i.e.: volunteer awards for specific senior activities) could allow other communities to model successful volunteer programs for seniors.

VI. INFORMATION AND MAPPING

The IFPC has no recommendations in this area for 2002-2003.

VII. FOOD AND WATER SAFETY

The task force believes this is a very important area and that the IFPC should have a recommendation based on the current national and state emphasis on food safety. Areas of special concern are:

Microbial Contamination

Pesticide and other Toxic Contamination

At this point in time, the IFPC has no specific recommendations in these areas, but will continue to monitor to provide specific recommendations for 2003.