

Linn County Food System Assessment

snapshot

This is a brief overview of the local food system data collected for Linn County, as part of the Iowa Community Transformation Grant (CTG). Linn County Public Health (LCPH) is one of 25 recipients of the Iowa CTG.

What is the food system?

A food system includes all processes and infrastructure involved in feeding a population. The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) food system assessment tool breaks the system down into five sectors: production, transformation, distribution & retail, access & consumption, and waste management. Each sector consists of a wide array of activities and stakeholders.

To complete the food system assessment, Linn County Public Health (LCPH) and the Linn County Food Systems Council (LCFSC or the Council) worked together to gather the data. **The full assessment is available at: bit.ly/LinnFoodAssessment.** Check out the full assessment for citations and more data.



What is in the assessment?

LCPH and LCFSC collected 110 data indicators. They divided the indicators into 1 of 4 different domains that relate food system issues to health: health and wellbeing, environmental health, social and cultural health, or economic

health. They assigned each indicator with 1 of 5 food system sectors, outlined above. They also designated each indicator with a status (red, yellow, or green, dependent on the trend direction or current level) and priority (1, 2 or 3).

About the Community Transformation Grant

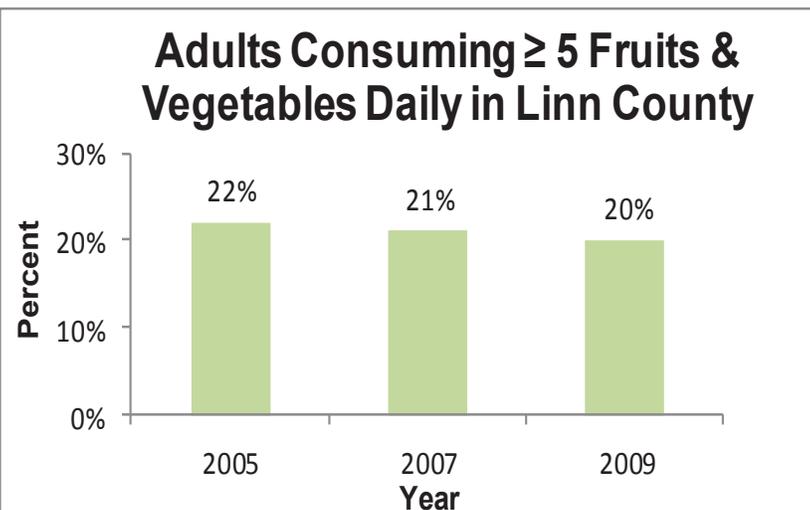
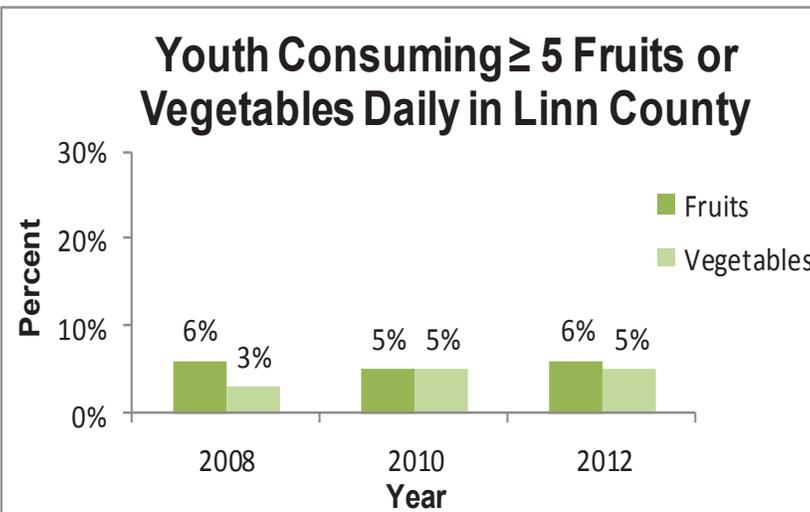
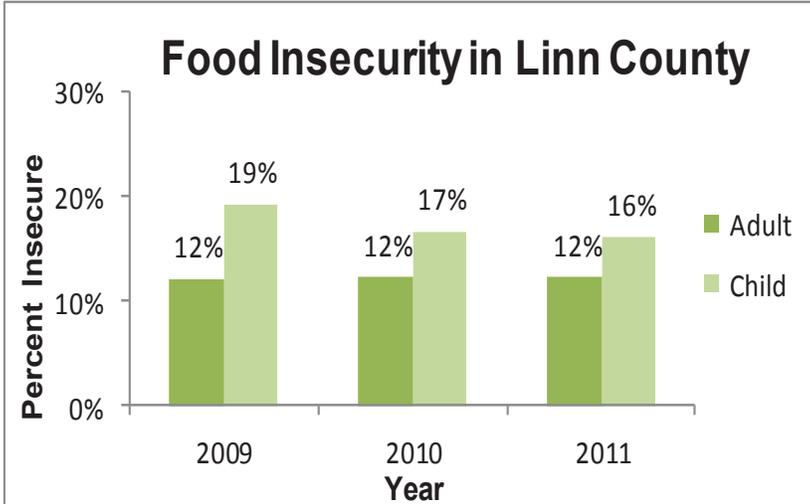
Linn County is one of 25 counties in Iowa with CTG. CTG is a program of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). According to IDPH, the grant's purpose is "to reduce risk factors responsible for the leading causes of death and disability by creating healthier communities." For more information, go to idph.state.ia.us/CTG.

Funding was provided by the CDC.



Data & Graphs

Human Health & Wellbeing



Food Insecurity, Food Access, & Obesity

Food insecurity, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), is a household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food. In 2011, nearly 1 in 6 children in Linn were food insecure.



Limited access to places like grocery stores, supermarkets, or other sources of healthy and affordable food may make it harder for some people to eat a healthy diet, according to the USDA. In 2010, **13,702** children in Linn County lived more than 1 mile away from a supermarket or grocery store.

Access to and affordability of healthy foods may impact obesity rates. The Cedar Rapids Community School District collects data on kindergarteners and 5th graders in some schools. In 2013, **35.2%** of kindergarteners and **40.8%** of 5th graders were either overweight or obese. A child can be food insecure and obese or overweight, since food insecurity has to do with having limited or uncertain access to adequate food.





Environmental Health Facts

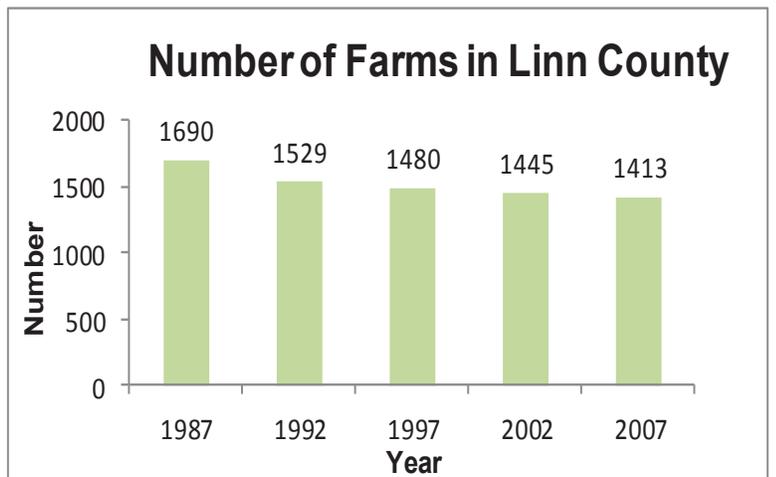
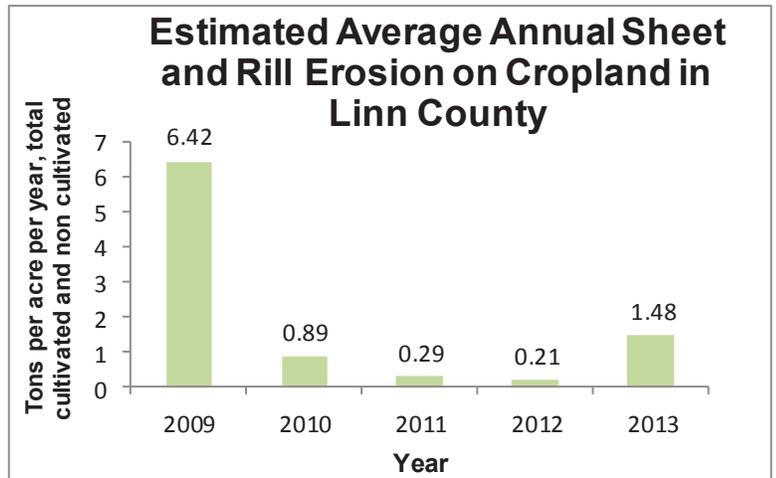
- **275,984** acres of harvest cropland in 2007.
- In 2013, there were **10** farmers markets.
- **18** farms marketed products through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms in 2007.
- The Iowa Quality Index designated the Cedar River as having **poor** quality in 2011, 2012 and 2013.
- The number of acres treated with commercial fertilizer increased from 184,068 in 1987 to 241,139 in 2007 (**31%** increase).
- The number of acres treated with chemicals increased substantially from 2002 to 2007. For example, 29,035 acres were treated with chemicals for insects in 2002, compared to **86,964** in 2007.



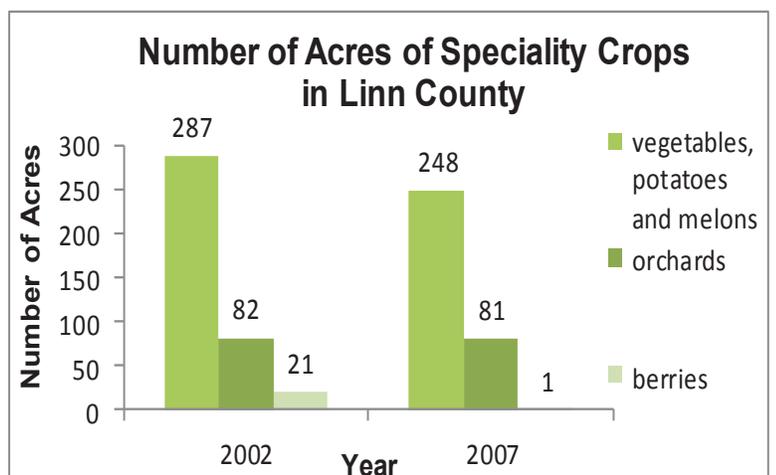
Social & Cultural Health Facts

- There were approximately **34** community gardens, **9** school gardens, and **332** city-run plots in 2013.
- There are currently no community kitchens (a facility available for small-scale food processing by community members).
- The average age of principal operator in 2007 was **56.6** years—a nearly 5 year increase from 1987.

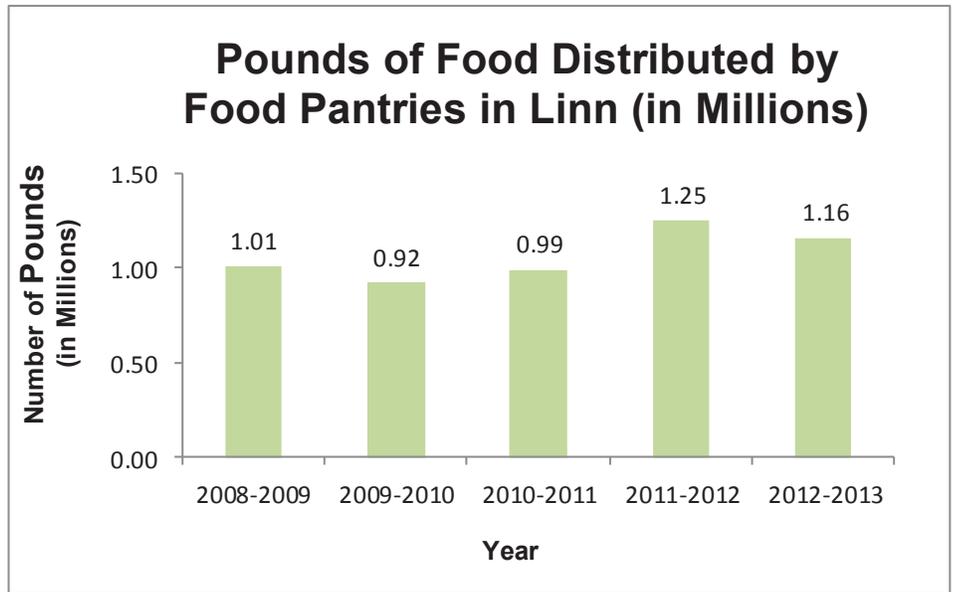
Environmental Health



Social and Cultural Health



Social and Cultural Health, continued



Economic Health

- Farm income (value of sales) in 2007 in Linn County was **\$6,931,000**.
- Average farmworker wage (payroll divided by number of workers) in 2007 was **\$8.48** in Linn County.
- Value of agricultural products sold directly to individuals for human consumption (as compared to the percentage of total agricultural sales) was **\$165,606,000** in 2007 in Linn County.
- Number of people in poverty in 2011 was **22,076** in Linn County (approximately 10% of the population).



Livestock on farms in Linn County (2007)

# cattle and calves	34,076
#hogs and pigs	137,523
# poultry (layers, broilers, turkeys, etc.)	5,798

The full assessment is available at: bit.ly/LinnFoodAssessment.

Citations are available in the full assessment.

For more information, email health@linncounty.org.