



# Aitkin County Public Health's SHIP Program PartnerSHIP News!



NOVEMBER 2023

[Aitkin County SHIP Website](#)

[Resources](#)

[Healthy Northland Website](#)



## Aitkin, Itasca, Koochiching, Carlton, Cook, Lake, and St. Louis counties make up Healthy Northland.

Supported by the Minnesota Department of Health's Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP), Healthy Northland strives to make the healthy choice the easy choice for everyone in Northeastern Minnesota through collaborative and community-based policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change efforts.

[Visit Healthy Northlands' Webpage!](#)



In November's newsletter read about: Health Equity Minute on Commercial Tobacco, Youth and Schools; Walk! Bike! Fun! Educator Training in Two Harbors; *Aitkin County SHIP Coordinator being a finalist for the Minnesota Society for Public Health Education's Outstanding Contributions for Public Health Education Award*; and learn about Ecolibrium3.

[Read the November Newsletter!](#)

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## Featured Success Story



# Food Hubs Work Together to Aggregate and Distribute Local Food

*Editor: Allison Rian, Aitkin Farmers Market Hub Manager*

Together, the Grand Rapids and Aitkin Farmers Market Hubs work collaboratively to source and aggregate local food as a regional network. During the height of harvest in the summer months, a steady stream of “hyperlocal” produce makes it into Market Share boxes, Veggie Rx programs, into Ball jars on pantry shelves, and onto plates at local restaurants. Aitkin Farmers Market Hub manager Allison Rian, and Grand Rapids Farmers Market Hub manager Wiliyn Dowell, coordinate to keep food fresh and safe on the almost 80 mi journey between the furthest farms and their hubs.

As the harvest season winds down and root vegetables remain available, only a few farms have the storage capacity to continue deliveries. To meet the demands of local food for area farm to school programs and Riverwood's Food Rx program, Dowell and Rian again joined forces to meet a minimum order with the Food Farm in Wrenshall, Minnesota, for one major aggregation effort.

Between both food hubs, 1,786 lbs. of food was ordered from the Food Farm and delivered on November 15th to Riverwood Healthcare Center, where local food champions were present to continue the distribution. Food delivered was sorted and weighed to create 54 boxes for Riverwood's first Winter Food Rx box which contained 1 lb. beets, 2 lbs. rutabaga, 7 lbs. potatoes, 6 lbs. squash, 5 lbs. onions, 5 lbs. cabbage and 0.75 lbs. of garlic. Rian additionally made a farm to school delivery to Aitkin High School and Rippleside Elementary School. That food made it onto school kids' plates the next day.

Jane Jewett, from Palisade MN, collected the Grand Rapids area order and made the next leg of the journey to connect with Dowell, who then made more school deliveries from there. Jewett's transport vehicle also included pork from a farmer in Cambridge and apples from Gilby's Orchard in Aitkin, destined for school kids' trays around the Grand Rapids area.

Everyone counted it a successful day for local farmers and consumers!



1 lb. Beets

5 lbs. Cabbage

2 lbs. Rutabaga

0.75 lb. Garlic

5 lbs. Onions

7 lbs. Potatoes

6 lbs. Squash

4 lbs. Carrots



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# Congratulations!

## Riverwood Healthcare Center in Aitkin Receives 2023 Rural Health Award

Located in rural Northeast Minnesota, Riverwood Healthcare Center works hard to provide services to a diverse population of elderly, low - income, and multi - generational families.

Click [HERE](#) to read more!

Together, the Aitkin Farmers Market Hub, Aitkin County Public Health's SHIP program and Riverwood established the Food Rx Program that provides qualifying participants with Community Support Agriculture (CSA) shares and Riverwood Connect Bucks that was used at the Aitkin Farmers Market this past season.

## Food Rx Program

**Riverwood**  
HEALTHCARE CENTER

Public Health  
Aitkin County

Scan the code with this camera on your phone to find out if you qualify for Food Rx

Providing patients and families access to fresh fruits and vegetables. ✓

Food is sourced locally via our area and neighboring farmers. ✓

To learn more or to find out if you qualify, scan the QR Code for a self referral

Monthly Winter Food Rx Boxes ✓

**FOOD RX RECIPES**

**AITKIN FARMERS MARKET HUB**

**ship**  
statewide health improvement partnership

# MN Eats

SHIP collaborates with community partners to make changes that result in healthy foods being more available and affordable.

What does your community need?

✉ Connect with your local SHIP coordinator.  
Health.OSHI1@state.mn.us



## Vital partnership with communities

“ SHIP provides much-needed leadership, connections, time and funds for local food initiatives. Farm to School, SuperShelf, Food Rx and the Farmers’ Market would not be as successful in Aitkin County without the efforts of our SHIP coordinator. Growing these connections with farmers and buyers keeps local dollars local, and that benefits everyone.”

—Allison Rian, Aitkin Farmers’ Market Hub Manager

“ SHIP has done so much to help local farmers get connected with local eaters. Aitkin County is a leader in farm to school in rural Minnesota, and that’s because of the sustained effort in SHIP.”

—Jane Jewett, Owner of WillowSedge Farm



## Connecting Local Food in our Communities

SHIP is partnering with local produce farmers to increase local fruits and vegetable consumption in our local schools and communities. Our goals are to increase farmer partnership through the Aitkin Farmers Market Hub to fill the gap of farm to school, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares and Food Rx boxes for Riverwood Healthcare Center.

Read more on MN EATS strategies

Interested in a MN EATS strategy? Contact your local [SHIP Coordinator Hannah Colby](#) to learn more on how to get started!



## SHIP STORY MAP

The Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) creates wellness across Minnesota's communities through community-driven, evidence-based, and equity-focused programs that tackle the root causes of chronic diseases.

To see SHIP work across the state of Minnesota, click on the image above or the link below. From the We Are SHIP page, scroll down to the map. At the far right, you will see a box that includes the state total (2,172 in dark blue print), and below that the Search the Map selection tool. You can now choose Topic Areas, Settings, or County.

[We are SHIP](#)

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# UPCOMING *Events*



Wednesday from 6:00 – 8:00 PM

## *Viewing of Angst Film*

Followed by a discussion at the RIALTO in Aitkin. Free small popcorn and pop for the first 100 attendees!

*Dec*  
**14**  
2023



Tuesday 9:00 am

## **Vitalize AITKIN Invitation**

Hosted by Aitkin County Public Health's SHIP Program and Riverwood Healthcare Center

Save the Date! Riverwood and SHIP are teaming up to host an open dialogue on Aitkin's shared open playbook featuring guest speaker Crow Wing Energized.

*Feb*  
**27**  
2024

[View Angst Film Flyer](#)



**Happy  
Holidays!**



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
**Aitkin County**

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