



# Aitkin County SHIP Program

## PartnerSHIP News!

JULY 2023

[Aitkin County SHIP Website](#)

[Community Partner Award Application](#)

[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 July's newsletter read about: Farmers Market 360 evaluation happening across Northeast Minnesota; the SuperShelf transformation at Aitkin First Lutheran Church; and upcoming events.

[Read July Newsletter!](#)

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*For the next few months, the Aitkin PartnerSHIP newsletter will be focusing on **MN EATS** as there is so much to share about all the fantastic work that is happening in our communities to increase access and consumption of nutritionally dense foods!*

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# Featured Success Story



“ Making the healthy choice the easy choice ”

**ship**  
statewide health  
improvement partnership

## Aitkin Farmers Market Hub

The Aitkin Farmers Market Hub (AFM Hub) is 1 out of 9 farmers market hubs across the state of Minnesota (Grand Rapids, Mankato, Moorhead, Red Wing, Rochester, Virginia, Wabasha, and Willmar). The Hub receives support from Renewing the Countryside; Minnesota Farmers Market Association, Minnesota Institute of Sustainable Agriculture and the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) program.

What's a food hub? Good question! Food hubs bring together produce from multiple farmers and offer it to larger-scale buyers. Farmers who don't have enough time or product to reach larger markets on their own can sell through a food hub. Buyers who can't deal with separate accounts for multiple farmers can buy local through a food hub.

The AFM Hub has a manager (currently Allison Rian), a role that also helps promote community regeneration and sustainability. The manager aggregates local produce from participating farms and delivers all the produce from those farmers from the hub to institutional buyers (i.e - school

districts for their farm to school program). Additionally, aggregates local produce to create market boxes for the community to purchase. New this year, the manager is aggregating market boxes for Riverwood Healthcare Center's FoodRx program.

The hub started out by sourcing local produce to create boxes that went to our seniors that was sponsored by Aitkin County CARE in 2020. The AFM Hub saw how successful this was and created their veggie sides and market share program (their version of a CSA). In 2022 the community was able to buy these boxes week to week in addition to subscriptions.

With the goal to increase the number of buyers, the AFM Hub manager partnered with SHIP and transitioned Aitkin County School Districts participating in the farm to school program (ISD #1 and ISD #2) to start purchasing both proteins and local produce from The Hub. Other wholesale buyers purchasing online from the hub include: 2 restaurants, 1 food shelf, 1 assisted living and 1 nursing home. In 2023, Block North started purchasing from the Hub to include on their "Farm to Fork" menu which is featured on Monday nights.

In just 2022 alone, producers made \$3,571.00 of gross sales from the Veggie Sides and Market Share boxes from June through September. The AFM Hub manager assembled a total of 242 boxes during that time frame. Additionally, the AFM Hub had a total gross sales of \$9,174.10 from wholesale buyers which was a total of \$7,704.36 in producer payments.

Within the past three years, the AFM Hub has reached markets that have been difficult for individual producers to meet such as institutions, CSAs, farm-to-table and online customers. The Hub continues to have more sales, increasing the number of producers and customers along with building a sense of community at their market. Allison and supporting partners are not stopping here as the goal is sustainability to have The Hub around for years to come.

In case you missed it, check out [this article](#) written by the Minnesota Farmers Market Association on our local food hub!

The Aitkin Farmers Market wouldn't be where it is at today without two key local food champions, Allison Rian and Jane Jewett. Also, shoutout to our institutional/wholesale buyers and the community who are supporting the AFM Hub.

*Grant Funds Supporting The Hub:*

MDA Speciality Crop Block; USDA Farm-to-School Grant, Extension Risk Management Education Grant; Building Resilient and Inclusive Communities (BRIC) with Aitkin County CARE; Aitkin County Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) and the USDA Local Food Promotion Program Grant.

## VEGGIE SIDES & MARKET SHARE BOXES

SUPPORT LOCAL FARMERS!

If you want to pay with SNAP or have questions, call or text Allison Rian at 218-831-8890



OUR "VEGETABLE SIDES" BOX HAS ENOUGH FOOD FOR 2 SERVINGS FOR 3 MEALS (OR 6 MEALS AT A SINGLE SERVING). THIS IS A NUTRITION-PACKED BOX AT AN AFFORDABLE PRICE POINT.



A FULL BOX OF FARM FRESH STAPLES FOR FOODIES AND FAMILIES! IF YOU LOVE TO COOK AND SHARE YOUR MEALS OR IF YOU'RE FEEDING A GROWING FAMILY, THIS IS YOUR BOX.

**BONUS**

Buy your subscription by **June 10th** and receive an additional box at the end of the season!

1

### SCAN QR CODE

Use the camera feature and scan the code to go to website!



<https://openfoodnetwork.net/aitkin-farmers-market-food-hub/shop>

2

### SELECT YOUR PRODUCT

#### VEGGIE SIDES

Weekly Only (1 wk.) - \$15.00 **1 Box**  
Bi-Weekly (16 wks.) - \$120.00 **8 Boxes**  
Weekly (16 wks) - \$240.00 **16 Boxes**

#### MARKET SHARE

Weekly Only (1 Box) - \$25.00 **1 Box**  
Bi-Weekly (8 Boxes) - \$200.00 **8 Boxes**  
Weekly (16 Boxes) - \$400.00 **16 Boxes**

3

### GO TO CART & CHECKOUT

Payment options: Pay online (credit card), Pay at the market (cash, check or SNAP card). Click "Complete Order"



4

### PICK UP LOCATION

Aitkin Farmers Market  
Every Saturday  
Between 10:00 am and 12:00 pm  
Tractor Supply Parking Lot

Weather is unpredictable! Estimated starting date of subscription is June 24 and ending October 10 of 2023. You will be notified via email when subscriptions will start!

Interested in purchasing either a Veggie Sides or Market Share Box? Scan the QR code and sign up to receive one at the next Aitkin Farmers Market!

## Partner/s Spotlight!

### Allison Rian

Allison Rian is the owner of [AliCat Farm](#) located south of Aitkin. Allison and her family grow potatoes, greens, corn, eggs, produce, and microgreens.

Rian started as the Aitkin Farmers Market (AFM) Hub Manager in 2020 during the pandemic year and stated "It was a challenge. But we have built a lot of community relationships and believe we are doing really well." Since 2020, Allison has been focusing on building relationships between consumers, wholesale buyers and farmers.

Allison has been collaborating on statewide grant-funded projects over the past few years to improve local food systems and community connections for healthy eating in the area. Rian states "newly funded projects in 2022 and 2023 give us the opportunity to make more connections among farmers, buyers, and the community.

With her dedication and passion for everyone to have access to fresh produce, she is working really hard to grow the AFM Hub and bring local produce across the county. Allison continues to onboard new farmers, new customers, new institutional buyers (i.e. Riverwood's Food Rx Program) and the number of Veggie Sides and Market Share boxes continue to increase every year.

Allison is a member of SHIP's Community Leadership Team and is involved in the following local food projects: Farmers Markets; Farm to School/Institution/ECE; The Terrace Project and Food Rx at Riverwood Health Care Center.

Rian reports "2023 is going to be a BlockBuster year for Aitkin and we are really excited!"

If you'd like to learn more about the Aitkin Farmers Market Hub, please contact [Allison](#) to learn more!



*Aitkin Farmers Market Hub  
Manager*

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## Jane Grimsbo Jewett

Jane is an associate director of the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture (MISA) and is owner of [WillowSedge Farm](#) in the Palisade



area of Aitkin County. Jewett raises beef, pork, and lamb and is our farmer that raises most of the proteins for the Farm to School programs at Hill City and Aitkin School Districts.

Jewett has been involved over many years in training farmers and farmers' market managers on food safety and food regulations. She is also a leader with the Minnesota Farmers Market Hubs project across the state serving as a market mentor. Additionally, been involved at the state level with Minnesota's Farm to School program. In fact, Jane helped edit the [Food From Farms: Toolkit for Direct Purchasing of Local Food](#) which was published by MISA and was based off of Aitkin's Farm to School program.

Jane has a passion for local food and is an advocate working to create a food system and environment that supports rural farmers and the communities they live in.

Aitkin is very lucky to have her as a local food champion, expert, and farmer in our very own backyard. Jane continues to provide tremendous support for the Aitkin Farmers Market & Hub, Farm to School program, The Terrace Project and the Food Rx Program at Riverwood Health Care Center.



*Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture (University of Minnesota Extension) & Owner of WillowSedge Farm*

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## WHAT IS MN EATS?



## 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



The MN EATS context area is dedicated to creating healthier food environments by increasing access to affordable, appealing, healthy, and culturally relevant food and beverage options. The vision for this work is that all people in Minnesota experience an equitable, just, nourishing and resilient food system that is responsive to change.

## Statewide Health Improvement Partnership EATS Activities

### Statewide Activity: Food Rx

The goal of the Food Rx Statewide Activity is to connect a clinic or health system with a food retailer to deliver a "Food Rx" to clients or patients via a standardized screening and referral process.

### Statewide Activity: SuperShelf

SuperShelf is a PSE approach that transforms food shelves using a values-based approach to create a welcoming environment in which to access healthy foods. The SuperShelf approach is rooted in evidence-based practices and relies on collaborative partnerships between food shelves, SHIP, University of Minnesota Extension, and hunger relief organizations.



### **Flexible: Farm to School, ECE, and/or Institution**

Farm to school is being expanded to include additional settings of Early Childhood Education providers (ECE) and Institutions that have cafeteria-like food services. The core components of Farm to School are traditionally referred to classroom, curriculum, and community, but can be applied to the additional settings more broadly as:

- **Procurement:** Local foods are purchased, promoted, and served in the cafeteria or as a snack or taste - test.
- **On-site gardens:** Students or other participants engage in hands-on learning through gardening.
- **Education:** Students or other participants engage in education activities related to agriculture, food, health or nutrition.

### **Other Flexible SHIP Activities:**

- Community Food Assessments & Planning
- Food Guidelines
- Breastfeeding (i.e. supportive spaces & places)
- Community Based Agriculture (i.e. community garden)
- Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
- Food Nutrition & Security
- Farmers Markets
- Healthy Food Retail
- CACFP Guidelines
- Baby Cafe
- Supporting Students with Chronic Conditions
- Comprehensive framework for addressing school nutrition environment and services.
- Workplace gardens
- Policy, System, and Environment work supporting healthy food vending, cafeterias, and snack stations.
- Healthy Beverage Access

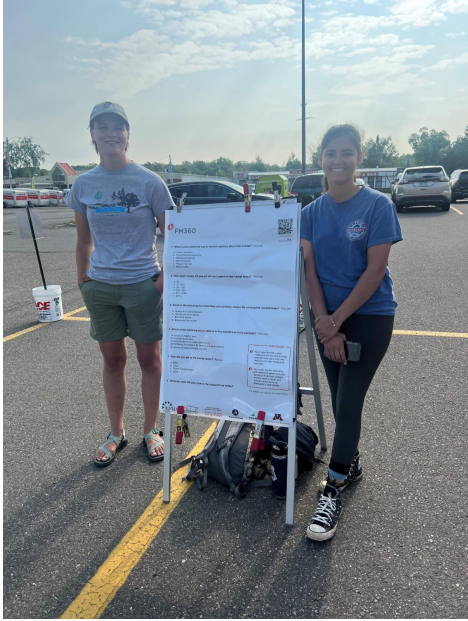
Interested in a MN EATS strategy mentioned above? Contact your local [SHIP Coordinator Hannah Colby](#) to learn more on how to get started!

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### **Photos of MN EATS work with collaborative partners in Aitkin County (Part 1)**

(Aitkin Farmers Market & Hub; Hill City Community Garden; Aitkin County CARE; University of Minnesota Extension; Good Food Sold Here at Palisade One Stop; and the SuperShelf Transformation at Aitkin First Lutheran Church)









## FARM TO FORK MENU

**HEIRLOOM CAPRESE** ..... 12.95  
First of the Season Heirloom Tomatoes, Garden Fresh Basil & Garlic Scape Pesto from Clear Lake Gardens, Fresh Mozzarella Cheese & toasted bread

**ASIAN GREEN BEAN SALAD**..... 12.95 ADD CHICKEN 4 ADD SHRIMP 6  
Asian Marinated Green Bean from Bryndlewood Farms Salad with Cabbage from Buck Hills Farm, Red Onions from Maple Ridge Farm & Peppers

**ZUCCHINI BLOSSOMS**..... 16.95  
Ground Pork Roast from Righteous Oaks Farm Sausage Stuffed Zucchini Blossoms from Hurd Family Farm

**FARM FRESH CHICKEN LASAGNA**..... 17.95  
Chicken from Chengwatana Farm Zucchini Noodle Lasagna served with a fresh Garden Greens from Maple Ridge Farm Caesar and Garlic Bread

**BRITISH WHITE FARM BURGER**..... 16.95 ADD CHEESE .50  
1/2 Pound Grass Fed Burger from Grillin Meats The Farm-HERS topped with a Red Onion from Maple Ridge Farm Marmalade on a Fresh Baked Roll with Kohlrabi from Maple Ridge Farm Fries and Garden Made Cabbage from Buck Hills Farm Coleslaw. CHEESE OPTIONS: Cheddar, Pepper Jack, Smoked Gouda or Swiss

**ARONIA & CHERRY BERRIES COBBLER ALA MODE**..... 7.95  
Aronia Berries from Produce Acres are considered a super-berry and are a low glycemic, tart until juiced. The skin of the Berry is tart and it looks like a blueberry. Tart Cherries from The Farm-HERS compliment the Aronia Berries for a delightful dessert

## FARM TO FORK FARMERS

**CLEAR LAKE GARDENS**..... AITKIN  
Kelley Rajala & Eric Robinson FB AITKIN SUMMER FARM FESTIVAL Aug. 6, 11 - 3 at Clear Lake Gardens. Local Farms, Arts & Crafts, Food & Drinks, Tours & Demos, Education, Music.

**MAPLE RIDGE PRODUCE FARM**..... AITKIN  
Erik Heimack & Jay Rigdon Vegetable farm, eggs and flour, Romaie, Butterhead, spinach, baby kale, Swiss chard, spring onions, Napa cabbage, Mobile Food Stand 29555 380th Ave FB

**BRYNDEWOOD GARDENS**..... GRAND RAPIDS  
Wil & Brynden Lenius 9th Season, 4 High Tunnels, Tomatoes, Peppers, Eggplants, Broccoli, Cabbage, Kohlrabi, Much More, Herbs, Flowers. bryndewood@gmail.com FB 3251 Horseshoe Lake Road, Grand Rapids bryndlewoodgardens.com

**HURD FAMILY FARM**..... AITKIN  
Matt & Adrienne Hurd Sustainably minded family farm dedicated to providing healthier food options. Beef, Hen, Duck, Quail Eggs, Artistic Ukrainian Eggs, Folded Books & Journals. FB 218-927-4553

**BUCK HILLS FARM**..... AITKIN  
Bev and Steve Antonich Allen and Leslie Peterson Root crops, vegetables and seasonal products 763-537-4802 34312 330th Avenue FB

**CHENGWATANA FARM**..... PALISADE  
Lynn Mizner Brown Free Range Eggs, Organic Feed, Broiler Chickens, Grass Fed Lamb, Organic Fruit & Veggies, Black Welsh Mountain Sheep Breeding Stock, Wool, Am. Tree Farm System chengwatanacommunity.com lynnsmzner@gmail.com 218-232-4189

**GRILLIN MEATS THE FARM-HERS**..... HOLDINGFORD  
Christina Traeger Regenerative Ag on every acre. Beef, Lamb, Pastured Heritage Turkey, Mangalita Hogs, Geese, Ducks, Chickens, Raw Milk, Eggs, Pork Lard, Pig Skins, Chicken Hearts, Farm is north of Holdingford 320-293-2995 grillinmeats.com FB

**PRODUCE ACRES**..... COLD SPRING  
Russ and Therese Willenbring 75 acre certified organic farm cabbage, beans, sweet corn, aronia berries. 25784 County Road 58 produceacres.com

**RIGHTEOUS OAKS FARM**..... AITKIN  
Katie & Pat Nix Solar powered century old family farm. Maple Syrup, Pastured Broiled Chickens, Pork, Grass Fed Beef righteousoaksfarm.com

## LOCAL

EST. 2023  
EVERY SUMMER MONDAY 4 PM  
LOCALLY SOURCED FOOD TO NOURISH YOUR SOUL WHILE PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH SUPPORTING OUR FARMERS WITHIN A 75 MILE RADIUS OF BLOCK NORTH BREW PUB IN DOWNTOWN AITKIN

## FOOD HUB

ORDER FARM FRESH FOOD ON THE AITKIN FARMERS MARKET HUB. OPENFOODNETWORK.NET. NINE LOCAL FARMERS. EASY ORDER. AITKIN FARMERS MARKET IS A MINNESOTA NON-PROFIT ASSOCIATION OF FARMERS AND VENDORS. THEIR MISSION IS TO INCREASE LOCAL FOOD SECURITY AND FOOD EQUITY BY PROVIDING ACCESS TO ALL DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS. CONTACT: ALLISONJRIAN@GMAIL.COM







## 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,

## FUNDING STILL AVAILABLE!



**2023 Community Partner Awards Now Available!**

Aitkin County Public Health's Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) Program is pleased to announce a **Community Partner Award opportunity in 2023**. Funding is intended to support the implementation of action plans that create sustainable policy, system and/or environment (PSE) changes that expand opportunities for healthy eating, breastfeeding, physical activity, tobacco-free living and well-being. To be eligible, your organization must serve Aitkin County.

**PREVIOUS PROJECTS FUNDED**

- AITKIN CITY PARK PLANNING PROJECT
- MATERIALS PURCHASED FOR A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT IN 2023 (AITKIN)
- SUPERSHELF TRANSFORMATION AT AITKIN FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH FOOD SHELF
- COMMUNITY GARDEN IN HILL CITY

To learn more about SHIP and the Community Partner Award opportunity visit [www.aitkincountyship.org](http://www.aitkincountyship.org) or scan the QR Code or call Hannah Colby, RD at 218-927-7271



The Statewide Health Improvement Partnership, often called SHIP, supports community-driven solutions to expand opportunities for active living, healthy eating, and tobacco prevention. A primary goal of this collaboration is to prevent chronic diseases before they start. A few things have changed this year — we no longer call them grants and instead call them partner awards.

Funding is intended to support the implementation of action plans that create sustainable policy, system and/or environment (PSE) changes that expand opportunities for healthy eating, breastfeeding, physical activity, tobacco-free living and well-being. To be eligible, your organization must serve Aitkin County.

[Community Partner Award Instructions](#)

[Community Partner Award Application \(word\)](#)

[Community Partner Award \(PDF\)](#)

[Community Partner Award Budget Proposal](#)

[SHIP PSE MDH](#)

**Contact:**

Please direct all correspondence to the contact information provided below.

Hannah Colby, RD, LD, CLS  
Registered Dietitian  
Health Educator  
Aitkin County Public Health  
(218) 927-7271  
[hannah.colby@co.aitkin.mn.us](mailto:hannah.colby@co.aitkin.mn.us)



\*Supported by the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership, Minnesota Department of Health

2023

**Community Partner Funding Application****Section 1: Applicant Information**

Date	
Organization Name	
Street Address	
Mailing Address if different	
City, State, Zip Code	
County	

Primary Contact	
Phone	
Email	

Financial Contact	
Phone	
Email	

Information provided in this application may be used for promotional materials. This includes, but is not limited to: fact sheets, Minnesota Department of Health reports, newsletters, social media posts, and media releases. Additional information may be requested by Sherburne County staff; e.g., a release might be requested for individuals in photographs.

☐ By checking this box, you acknowledge and accept the statement above.

**Which project area are you applying under? Select only one.**

(Your organization may apply for both a MN Well-being grant and one of the following: MN Eats, MN Moves or MN Commercial Tobacco Free grant. If choosing to do so, you must submit a separate application for each project.)

- ☐ MN Eats  
☐ MN Moves  
☐ MN Commercial Tobacco Free (CTF)  
☐ MN Well-Being

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## Upcoming Events



7/12/23

# AITKIN SUMMER FARM FESTIVAL

Sunday, August 6, 2023 / 11am-3pm / Clear Lake Gardens



## Summer Farm Festival Celebrates All Things Local -- FREE PUBLIC EVENT

"Aitkin County has a lot of great local food, local products and local talent", said event organizers Kelley Rajala and Judy Douglas.

The two are hosting the Aitkin Summer Farm Festival, Sunday August 6 to bring together local farmers, food businesses, related organizations, education, art and music.

"We see the Festival as an opportunity to showcase local businesses of Aitkin County" they added.

Participants include the Aitkin Farmers Market, the Aitkin Food Hub, Block North Brewery, Glacial Lakes Brewers, Vangstad Creamery, local farms, food producers, artists and organizations that share the values of local production, handcrafting, environmental stewardship and sustainability.

Several of the farms are members of the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota, an organization that supports local food production.

Mille Lacs Electric Cooperative, Renewing the Countryside, and Minnesota Grown are supporters of the event.

The venue is a historic farmstead, with an iconic red barn, near Glen on beautiful Clear Lake, 10 miles north of Mille Lacs and 20 miles south of Aitkin, just 1 mile off Hwy 47 on 292nd Street.

Date & Time: Sunday, August 6, 2023 11am-3pm

Location: Clear Lake Gardens, 31213 292nd St. Aitkin, Glen Township

## CONTACT INFO

Phone/Text: Kelley Rajala 707-331-6850

Event Website: [clearlakegardens.org/events](http://clearlakegardens.org/events)

Facebook Page: Clear Lake Gardens

Email: [clearlakegardens@gmail.com](mailto:clearlakegardens@gmail.com)

Address: Clear Lake Gardens, 31213 292nd St. Aitkin, MN 56431



Try email marketing for free today!