



Aitkin County Public Health

# PartnerSHIP News!

*October 2024*

[Aitkin County SHIP Website](#)

[Resources](#)

[Northeast SHIP Website](#)

[View as a web page!](#)



## **Aitkin, Itasca, Koochiching, Carlton, Cook, Lake, and St. Louis counties make up Northeast SHIP**

Stay updated with the latest news and events from Healthy Northland, the Northeast Minnesota Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP). Read about our health initiatives, community success stories, and upcoming events promoting healthy living in the region.

[Read the Northeast SHIP Community News!](#)

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**Check out the Northeast SHIP Website!**  
(formally called Healthy Northland)



Working together to make the Northeast

## a healthier place to LIVE, WORK, and PLAY!

Northeast SHIP serves Aitkin, Itasca,  
Koochiching, Carlton, Cook, Lake, and  
St. Louis Minnesota counties

DISCOVER OUR INITIATIVES

[www.northeastship.org](http://www.northeastship.org)

# FIND FOOD Aitkin County

About Resources FAQ




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Aitkin County

## FIND FOOD Aitkin County


### Need Help Finding Food Resources?

**LOOK NO FURTHER!**  
[www.findfoodaitkincounty.org](http://www.findfoodaitkincounty.org)

FindFoodAitkinCounty.org is a guide to help find groceries, serving all who need food. Serves as a one stop shop for people to learn about food access in Aitkin County and neighboring areas.

## FIND FOOD Aitkin County

### Maps




Emergency Food Resources Map  
All Food Resources Map

### Resources

- Local Food
- Just for Seniors
- Ask a Dietitian
- Videos
- Community Resources
- Facts, Answers & Questions

### Find a Recipe



RECIPE CARD  
Strawberry-Rhod Popovers



FIND FOOD  
Aitkin County

[www.findfoodaitkincounty.org](http://www.findfoodaitkincounty.org)

## Featured Recipe of the Month!

Apple pie fanatics... this is for you! With the same scrumptious aroma and flavors of freshly-baked apple pie filling, this simple rendition has even more a-peel-ing qualities you're going to love: it's made in the microwave, has a fraction of the sugar, carbs, and saturated fat, and takes less than 5 minutes to whip up.



## 5 - Minute Apple Pie

*With the aroma and flavors of freshly-baked apple pie filling, this simple rendition has even more you're going to love: it's made in the microwave.*

**Ingredients**

1 apple finely diced,  
skin on  
¼ teaspoon ground  
cinnamon  
1 tablespoon firmly  
packed brown sugar  
2 tablespoons water  
2 teaspoons corn starch  
or arrowroot flour  
4 cinnamon graham  
cracker squares (2 full  
sheets), crumbled

**Directions**

1. Place the diced apple in a microwave-safe bowl. Add the cinnamon and brown sugar, stirring until the apple pieces are evenly coated.
2. In a small bowl or ramekin, dissolve the corn starch in water to make a slurry. Stir until smooth with no lumps, then pour it into the apple mixture, stirring to combine. This slurry will help thicken the apple mixture.
3. Microwave the apple mixture for 1 minute. Carefully remove and stir, then microwave for another minute until thick and gooey.
4. Stir in the crumbled graham cracker squares. Divide between 2 ramekins (~18 ounces each) or small bowls, and if you like, add a dollop of whipped topping and a sprinkle of cinnamon or apple pie spice.



*Recipe adapted from  
Joy Bauer, RD*

[www.findfoodaitkincounty.org](http://www.findfoodaitkincounty.org)

## SUCCESS STORIES

### Apple Crunch Day Takes a Bite Out of the State Capitol

Author: Allison Rian - Aitkin Farmers Market Hub Manager

October is Minnesota Farm to School and Early Care Month! One of the fun activities for this month is the Minnesota Great Apple Crunch. The apple is the Minnesota state fruit, and for good reason: we grow amazing apples. On October 10, kids, educators, policy makers, farmers, and anyone who loves apples countdown to 12:00 p.m. and then take a big bite out of a crunchy apple. Registrations are collected to track the number of "crunchers." This year 201,354 Minnesotans registered; imagine the sound of that crunch! Among them, 181,277 were K-12 students.

Allison Rian, Aitkin Farmers Market Hub manager, traveled to the state Capitol to participate in the Minnesota Great Apple Crunch with other Farm to Kids stakeholders. Farm to School purchases have become a valuable part of the local food supply chain in Aitkin County, and Allison was grateful to be able to share that with other advocates and decision makers at the Capitol. The apple, a SweeTango from Fireside Orchard and Gardens in Northfield, was delicious.





Left to Right: Sara George - RTC, Allison Rian - Aitkin Farmers Market Hub Manager, Erin McKee - IATP (Institute Agriculture, Trade and Policy), Thom Peterson - Commissioner of Agriculture, Nora Roberts - IATP



Left to Right: Sara George - RTC, Allison Rian- Aitkin Farmers Market Hub Manager, Patrice Bailey - Assistant Commissioner of Agriculture, Nikki Warner - The Good Acre

*Photos provided by Allison Rian - Aitkin Farmers Market Hub Manager*

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## Riverwood Healthcare Center Launches Pop-Up Farmers Market as Part of Food Rx Program's Second Year

Authors:

*Hannah Colby, RD, LD, CLS - Health Educator & SHIP Coordinator at Public Health*

*Emma Arnold - Population Health Coordinator at Riverwood Healthcare Center*

*Allison Rian - Aitkin Farmers Market Hub Manager*

In its second year of offering the innovative Produce Prescription Program, or "Food Rx," Riverwood Healthcare Center is once again demonstrating its commitment to addressing food insecurity and improving community health. Building on the lessons learned from last year's launch, the hospital is trialing a new addition to the program: a pop-up farmers market. This initiative responds directly to feedback from participants, who expressed a desire to pick out their own produce when they arrive to spend their produce prescriptions.

### **What is the Food Rx Program?**

The Food Rx program at Riverwood Healthcare Center began as a way to integrate nutrition into patient care by receiving the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) grant from the Minnesota Department of Health. Recognizing the impact of diet on chronic diseases like diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease, Riverwood designed a system where healthcare providers and dietitians could "prescribe" fresh fruits and vegetables to patients who needed them most. Participants can also self-refer with an **online form** by answering the hunger vital screening tool. Participants of the Food Rx program receive two Food Rx Market boxes a month in the summer season and one Food Rx Market box a month in the winter season. The participants also receive \$50 in Riverwood Connects Market Bucks or coupons to spend at the Aitkin Farmers Market or on an additional Food Rx Market box.

### **Listening to the Community: The Pop-Up Farmers Market**

While the first year of Food Rx was a success, Riverwood's leadership and partners (Public Health and the Aitkin Farmers Market Hub) wanted to enhance the program further by addressing a key challenge: accessibility. Some participants faced difficulties traveling to the Aitkin Farmers Market to spend their Riverwood Connects Bucks or lacked the ability to purchase fresh produce frequently. After collecting feedback and carefully considering the barriers to food access, the healthcare center decided to experiment with a pop-up farmers market, with the Aitkin Farmers Market Hub, that could bring healthy food even closer to participants. This market allows participants to directly exchange their Riverwood Connects Market Bucks for farm-fresh produce, eliminating the need for long trips or inability to attend the Saturday farmers market. By partnering with local farmers, the pop-up market offers a variety of seasonal fruits and vegetables, ensuring that participants receive fresh, high-quality items. In addition, the market provides a community feel—creating a space where participants can engage with

local farmers, learn more about healthy food options, and get advice on how to prepare nutritious meals.

### **How the Pop-Up Market Works**

The market pop-up was held on Wednesday, October 16, 2024, usually aligning with clinic visits for Food Rx participants. Not only does this add convenience, but it also reinforces the connection between healthcare and nutrition. Participants can visit the market, meet with program staff, and redeem their Riverwood Connects Market Bucks for a variety of fruits, vegetables, and herbs.

### **Fostering Sustainable Health and Wellness**

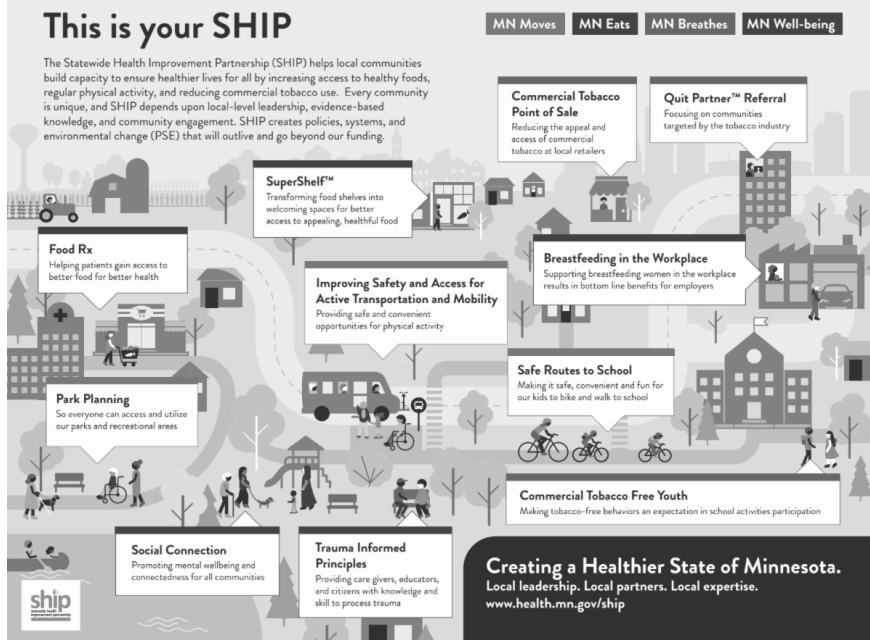
Riverwood Healthcare Center's Food Rx program is more than just an effort to address food insecurity; it is a movement toward preventive healthcare. By offering patients access to fresh, nutritious foods, the hospital is actively working to reduce the burden of diet-related diseases in the community. The addition of the pop-up farmers market demonstrates the Riverwood's responsiveness to community needs and its dedication to making health-promoting behaviors easier to achieve. It also emphasizes the importance of local partnerships with farmers, creating a symbiotic relationship where community members support local agriculture while improving their own health.

### **What's Next for Food Rx?**

As the pop-up market gains traction, Riverwood plans to continue listening to participants to refine the initiative by offering this model more frequently to participants. The second year of Food Rx has already shown that healthcare doesn't stop at the clinic door; it extends into the heart of the community, where access to healthy food is just as crucial to wellness as any medical treatment. Through this program, Riverwood Healthcare Center is putting fresh produce directly into the hands of those who need it most, empowering its patients to make better food choices and fostering a culture of preventive healthcare that benefits everyone.



*Photos provided by Allison Rian - Aitkin Farmers Market Hub Manager*

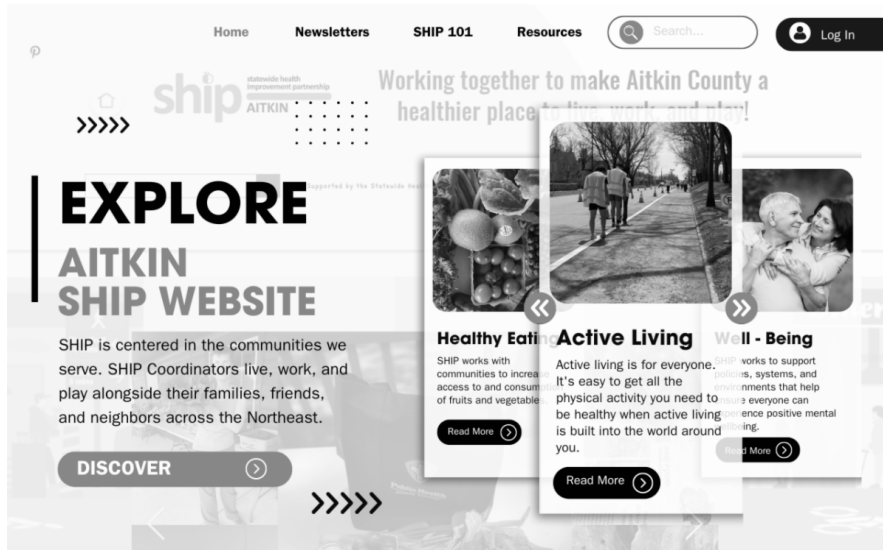


## SHIP STORY MAP

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.

The image above and the link below will take you to the storymap to explore work across Minnesota.

## We are SHIP



[www.aitkincountyship.org](http://www.aitkincountyship.org)

## Have An Event Coming Up?

Don't forget Aitkin County Public Health has a Mother and Infant Rest Area Canopy that is available for everyone to check out. This pop-up

canopy provides a private space for mothers to nurse their little one/s.  
You can check out the canopy and supplies via the [Aitkin County SHIP website](#).



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First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Statewide Health Improvement Partnership



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