

Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture: Making a Difference—Impacts and Leverage

- **What difference is the Leopold Center making?** Since 1998, the Leopold Center has awarded more than 500 competitive grants coming from every Iowa county. These awards often act as seed money to leverage other funding for research and demonstration projects, education, or planning and capacity-building efforts, aimed at developing profitable and sustainable farming systems for Iowa. The Center evaluates the outcomes to understand how our funding creates change in agricultural systems. The work of the Leopold Center and our partners is making a difference in Iowa and beyond. [More information.](#)
- **Key funding impact briefs.** These briefs show at-a-glance the impacts of six major investments of the Leopold Center. **For every dollar the Leopold Center spent on these projects, an additional \$4.60 was leveraged to complement or expand the work.** These projects represent approximately 22 percent of Leopold Center grant funding over 10 years.
 - [Low-Input-High-Diversity Systems](#)
 - [Long-Term Agroecological Research](#)
 - [Hoop Barns for Alternative Hog Production Systems](#)
 - [Regional Food Systems Working Group](#)
 - [Bear Creek Riparian Buffer Project](#)
 - [Practical Farmers of Iowa](#)

Key results from these projects, by the numbers, include:

- The Leopold Center awarded \$3,873,884 to these six projects. Together, these projects leveraged an additional \$17,911,553, or \$4.60 for every \$1 invested.
- 22,500 acres were shifted to more efficient conservation practices and structures such as riparian buffers to reduce nitrate runoff and soil erosion and to improve water quality and wildlife habitat.

➤ **Other Selected Areas of Impact, Support and Leverage**

Midwest Grape and Wine Industry Institute—The Leopold Center provided \$87,500 between 2005-2009. The funding has helped the institute's important work in growing the Iowa Wine Industry, which is valued at \$420M and brings in \$26M in taxes annually

Value-added Agriculture – Iowa MarketMaker website

In 2005, the Leopold Center awarded a \$25,000 competitive grant to Iowa State's Value Added Agriculture Program to purchase data and create the Iowa MarketMaker website. Thanks to the MarketMaker program, over 15,000 Iowa food businesses are connecting with one another and with new markets for their products. The on-line database has especially benefitted farmers selling through non-

commodity channels. Nearly 87% of the farms registered on MarketMaker's national network sell their products through direct sales to consumers and wholesalers. These farms have each been contacted an average of 2.9 times by customers or other food businesses that found them on the MarketMaker site.

Marketing Food System Initiative (MFSI) – The Leopold Center invested \$209,707 in nine Iowa local food systems and marketing projects from 2011-2014. For every dollar of Leopold Center investment, another \$1.20 was leveraged by project leaders and partners, totaling \$251,616. Some of these projects include:

- Regional Flavors of Northwest Iowa \$47,419 given, \$133,146 leveraged
- Improving profitability in small and very small meat processors in Iowa \$22,788 given, \$59,600 leveraged
- Transitioning farmers to produce for wholesale markets \$36,850 given, \$16,820 leveraged
- Des Moines farm to school pilot project: Local sourcing for special events and summer feeding \$7,475 given, \$16,600 leveraged
- Procurement tools to develop sustainable local food purchasing models for farm to school chapters (January 2014) \$36,000 given, \$12,000 leveraged

Practical Farmers of Iowa (PFI) – (2011-2012)

- \$167,117 awarded by the Leopold Center for pork niche market work which leveraged \$1,300,000+ in external funds (2001-2013)
- \$100,000 in other funds awarded by the Leopold Center, with \$1,041,879 gained through external leveraging

Bear Creek Riparian buffers – As a result of this nationally recognized research and similar research conducted throughout the United States, more than 200,000 acres of streamside buffers have been established in Iowa alone.

- \$900,000 awarded by the Leopold Center (1990-2012)
- \$6,100,000 externally leveraged funds gained
- 27 key organizational, agency and institutional partners

Long-term organic crops research

- \$900,000 awarded by the Leopold Center (1998-2012)
- \$2,390,969 externally leveraged funds gained

Alternative hog production (hoop barns)

- \$526,451 awarded by the Leopold Center (1997-2012)
- \$1,231,272 externally leveraged funds gained

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