

# Iowa State Profile

## State Partnerships Improving Nutrition & Equity

### Overview

State Partnerships Improving Nutrition & Equity (SPINE) is a program of the [National Association of Chronic Disease Directors](#) (NACDD) [Center for Advancing Healthy Communities](#). In collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity (DNPAO), NACDD is providing funding to nine DNPAO Ambassador states to address food and nutrition security through equitable and sustainable actions that tackle economic and social conditions limiting food and nutrition security across the lifespan. State Health Departments receiving funding are Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and Oregon. Five states – Iowa, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, and Oklahoma – received additional funding to augment existing efforts in their states to improve initiation, exclusivity, and duration of breastfeeding/chestfeeding.

SPINE states are developing meaningful partnerships or enhancing existing partnerships to support the implementation of a SPINE State Action Plan (SAP) that serves as a strategic roadmap for carrying out equitable food and nutrition security activities throughout their state. The initial project period was January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022; an additional year of funding was awarded in 2022, expanding the project period to December 31, 2023.

Learn more about the [SPINE program](#).

### Activities

#### Overarching

- Complete a targeted assessment with Iowa state-level public health and healthcare professionals to gain a better understanding of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to supporting equitable food and nutrition security throughout the Iowa food system.
- Complete a nationwide environmental scan of USDA State Nutrition Action Councils, food plans, and food policy councils to identify best practices in addressing food insecurity through policy, systems and environmental (PSE) change projects.

#### Food and Nutrition Security

- Draft a pledge that helps strengthen the partnership between Iowa Department of Health and Human Services and the Iowa Food System Coalition to work towards SPINE goals and objectives.
- Distribute an electronic survey to organizations/networks that are implementing PSE-aligned food and nutrition security strategies in Iowa, such as the Iowa Healthiest State Initiative and Iowa Public Health Association, to learn more about the food and nutrition security activities underway.

#### Breastfeeding/Chestfeeding

- Build an Iowa-specific database to house resources for all Iowans seeking breastfeeding related information, education, and support.

- Contract with three lactation experts to review the Iowa Breastfeeding Coalition’s current breastfeeding curriculum – “Breastfeeding Education for Iowa Communities” – and the USDA-Food and Nutrition Security “Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Breastfeeding Curriculum.”
- Revise the “Breastfeeding Education for Iowa Communities” curriculum into the following three categories to address the needs of all Iowans providing education and support to pregnant and breastfeeding persons: 1) basic breastfeeding; 2) breastfeeding issues; and 3) breastfeeding trauma informed care.

#### Health Equity

- Convene and support regional committees in creating a plan to recruit Iowans experiencing food and nutrition insecurity to participate in focus groups to inform the 2024 Iowa Nutrition Network Partnership Strategic Plan.
- Modify the “Breastfeeding Education for Iowa Communities” curriculum to include a component that directly addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion in breastfeeding/chestfeeding practices and lactation consultation.

#### **Health Equity Spotlight**

Formed regional committees, comprised of people and organizations working with Iowans experiencing food and nutrition insecurity, to foster connections across the state and create greater access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally relevant foods.



#### **Contact Information**

**Jill Lange, MPH, RD, LD**

[jill.lange@idph.iowa.gov](mailto:jill.lange@idph.iowa.gov)

Bureau Chief

Bureau of Nutrition and Physical Activity

Iowa Department of Health and Human Services

The “State Partnerships Improving Nutrition & Equity” program is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$1,755,901 with 100 percent funded by CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, CDC/HHS or the U.S. Government.