



2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Choose Iowa is the state's signature branding and marketing program promoting Iowa-grown, Iowa-made and Iowa-raised food, beverages and ag products. Choose Iowa helps farmers and small businesses add value, tap into new markets, and enhance consumer choices, all while generating economic activity within our communities. The program was initiated by Secretary Mike Naig and is administered by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.

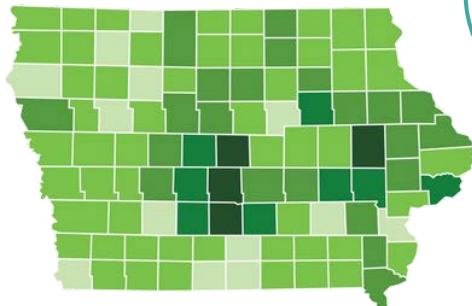
FY 2025 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Membership

300+ members in **86** counties

Members per county

- 11-38
- 6-10
- 3-5
- 1-2
- 0



26
veteran-owned
farms/small
businesses are
members

New in 2025!

Horticulture

45

Choose Iowa
members offer
horticulture products

Grants

97

grants benefiting
small farms and
businesses in 2025

Outreach

13,400+

Iowans engaged

124

outreach events



Mike Naig
Secretary of Agriculture

"The Choose Iowa program continues growing rapidly, with membership increasing by 110 percent in 2025. This valuable program helps strengthen the local food system by connecting consumers, restaurants, retailers, schools and food banks with Iowa-grown, made and raised products. Choose Iowa members report increased product sales and that revenue helps support family farms and businesses, and drive the economies of our rural communities."

POSITIVELY IMPACTING FAMILY FARMS AND SMALL BUSINESSES

Results from a 2025 Choose Iowa member survey:

- 86%** of respondents are very likely or likely to recommend Choose Iowa to others
- 78%** of respondents are very satisfied or satisfied with their membership
- 50%** of respondents report new business opportunities or partnerships
- 31%** of respondents report increased brand awareness
- 22%** of respondents report an increase in product sales

"Choose Iowa is such a critical part of our farm! You and your team have and continue to make a difference for our little farm! And we appreciate it so much!!"

Mekenze Cortum
Cortum Farm and Co.
Warren County
Choose Iowa Member

CHOOSE IOWA PASSPORT

LAUNCHED MAY 15, 2025

99

participating members

3,807

sign-ups

2,360

check-ins

The Choose Iowa Passport is a free, interactive digital platform designed to help Iowans and visitors find farms and farm stands, orchards, you-pick opportunities, farm-to-table dining and restaurants, farmers markets, and even boutique shops featuring locally sourced Iowa products including Iowa raised meats. This innovative marketing initiative, a collaboration between **Choose Iowa** and **Travel Iowa**, promotes unique agritourism experiences and encourages visitors to enjoy Iowa grown, raised and made food, beverages and agricultural products.



Member businesses continue adding the Choose Iowa logo on their product labels

CHOOSE IOWA FARM STORE CRAWL

JUNE 21-22, 2025

74

participating members

32

news mentions/articles

531,301

social media views

The first annual Farm Store Crawl was held to support Choose Iowa members who offer on-farm retail. Despite the hot summer weather, the event helped drive new memberships and connect consumers with family farms and businesses to drive sales of local ag products.



Hillsdale Lily Farm



Calyx Creek Lavender and Lodging

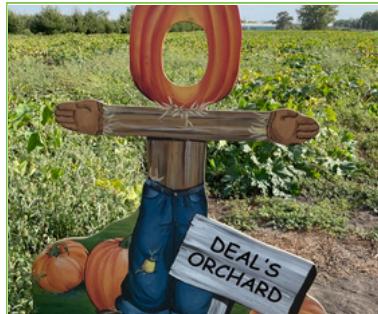
CHOOSE IOWA FARM OPEN HOUSE

SEPTEMBER 13-14, 2025

60

participating members

Sixty members located across the state invited Iowans to visit their farms, shop for local ag products at retail stores, and enjoy agritourism activities at apple orchards, pumpkin patches and corn mazes during the inaugural Choose Iowa Farm Open House.



Deal's Orchard



Paha Cider

"I just want to thank Choose Iowa. Our sales have easily doubled because of this weekend."

Valerie Lambertsen
The Martelle Market
 Jones County
 Choose Iowa Member



OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

IOWA FARM-TO-TABLE DINNERS

SPRING & SUMMER 2025

99 participating members



In partnership with the **Travel Iowa** in cooperation with the **Iowa Restaurant Association**, a series of four multi-course, seasonal Iowa Farm-to-Table Dinners were held to offer unique agritourism experiences. Celebrating each season, the four fine dining events featured ingredients from Choose Iowa members, prepared by nationally recognized, award-winning chefs, and hosted at some of Iowa's most stunning working farms. Learn more at iowafarmtotable.org.

SPRING

Chef Jes Baldus of taste/The Market (Osage)
Kittleson Brothers near St. Ansgar

SUMMER

Chef Lynn Pritchard of Table 128 & Hugo's
Wood-Fired Kitchen (Des Moines)
Revelton Distilling near Osceola

FALL

Chef Benjamin Smart of Big Grove Brewery (Iowa City)
Wilson's Orchard & Farm near Iowa City

WINTER

Chef Aaron Holt of Catering By Doolittle Farm (Story City)
Rose Farm near Norwalk

IOWA STATE FAIR

AUGUST 7-17, 2025

11 demonstrations
featuring local
Iowa ingredients

30 participating members

nearly
1,000
fairgoers attended

30 participating
food vendors

10 Choose Iowa members
provided ingredients

THE KITCHEN: CHOOSE IOWA PRESENTS...

Choose Iowa hosted free cooking demonstrations and food presentations during the Iowa State Fair. The daily events were held in The Kitchen inside the Maytag Family Theatre Building and featured Choose Iowa members' food and ingredients, as well as award-winning culinary professionals from across Iowa.



Chef Suriel and the team from Moo Meats preps beef samples

CHOOSE IOWA FAVORITE FAIR FOOD CONTEST

Now in its second year, Iowa State Fair attendees were encouraged to vote for their favorite foods made with Choose Iowa products or ingredients. Dairy Zone's Butter Cow Tornado, featuring milk from Iowa dairy producers, won this year's popular vote.



Dairy Zone's Butter Cow Tornado
won the 2025 popular vote

IOWA RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION CULINARY COMPETITION

NOVEMBER 19, 2025

12 competing chefs

18 Choose Iowa members
provided ingredients

550
attendees at the
Iowa Hospitality
Showcase event

Choose Iowa was a sponsor of the **Iowa Restaurant Association's** Culinary Competition, which challenged 12 of Iowa's top chefs to create entrees featuring ingredients from 18 Choose Iowa members. Encouraging chefs to source Iowa-grown, raised and made ingredients helps support Choose Iowa members' businesses and strengthen our local food system.

To encourage and reward chefs for seeking and featuring local Iowa grown ingredients, Choose Iowa sponsored a special award for the innovative use of ingredients sourced from Choose Iowa members. Chef Andrea Love at Dinner Delights took home the award for her dish, Hot Honey Bourbon Steak Salad.



Chef Tessa Cordoba of Maxwell's
winning entry



In 2025, every **\$1** invested in the Choose Iowa program was matched by **\$1.97** in private investment.

RECIPIENTS (in 2025)	APPROPRIATED FUNDING AWARDED	TOTAL INVESTMENT WITH PRIVATE MATCH (combined project budget values)
Choose Iowa Promotional (Brand) Program	300+ members	\$813,000.00
Butchery Innovation Grant*	9	\$355,000.00
Dairy Innovation Grant	15	\$750,000.00
Value-Added Grant	33	\$463,000.00
Farms to Food Banks**	7	\$200,000.00
Food Purchasing Pilot-Schools	34	\$70,000.00
TOTALS	97	\$2,651,000.00
		\$7,874,521.90

*Appropriated funds for Butchery Innovation grants were combined from FY2025 and FY2026 and awarded to 9 recipients to enable greater impact on sizeable projects.

**Appropriated funds for the Food Purchasing Pilot Program for Schools were designated in the FY2025 budget, however the school portion of the pilot is being conducted during the 2025-2026 school year.



MARCH 12, 2025

Choose Iowa Dairy
Innovation Grant
announcement at
Iowa State University
Creamery in Ames



SEPT. 17, 2025

Choose Iowa
Butchery Innovation
Grant announcement
at Maxwell Custom
Beef in Des Moines

"Iowans consume far more honey than we produce, with much of it imported from other states and even other countries. That's why it's essential that we differentiate ourselves and make it easy for customers to choose Iowa products first. When shoppers see the Choose Iowa logo on the top of my honey jars, that decision becomes simple... From farmers markets and agritourism to school programs and educational opportunities, **the Choose Iowa Program has helped Iowa honey producers expand their operations and open new market segments** that were simply not accessible years ago. The program continues to strengthen local agriculture, connect producers with consumers, and showcase the best of what Iowa has to offer — one jar of honey at a time."



H.R. Cook
Country View Honey
Dubuque County
Choose Iowa Member