



Nutrition

Why is nutrition important to Iowans?

About half of all American adults have one or more preventable, diet-related chronic diseases. Almost one-third of cancers in the United States are linked to obesity, lack of physical activity and/or poor nutrition.

Iowa has the 21st highest self-reported adult obesity rate in the nation. Over one-third (33.9%) of adults are obese and another one-third (34.4%) are overweight. Iowa is the 22nd heaviest state based on youth obesity rates – 15.3% of 10- to 17-year-olds are obese.

Breastfed infants are less likely to be sick from diarrhea, allergies and infections, and they have a reduced risk of SUIDS and obesity. For every month (up to 9 months) that a child is breastfed, their risk for becoming overweight/obese decreases by 4% per month. Mothers who breastfeed also benefit; they have a lower risk for breast and ovarian cancers.

Iowans are not getting the full benefits of breastfeeding — at 3 months of age, less than half of babies are breastfed.

Did you know?

Eating well is important starting at birth and throughout life. Unfortunately, Iowa isn't the champion in good nutrition. Iowa falls in the bottom three states for daily vegetable consumption by adults.

A focus on health equity

Often, programming is aimed at specific populations who are at risk for poor nutrition because of poverty or because there is limited access to healthy foods where they live. For example, SNAP-Ed funds nutrition education for students at schools where participation in free and reduced meals is high and for older adults at congregate meal sites and senior housing complexes.

What does the department do?

- Partners with Iowa's Healthiest State Initiative to provide resources, funding and technical assistance for [5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count!](#)
- Coordinates the [Pick a better snack™](#) program in 118 elementary schools, reaching over 24,000 students and families with nutrition and physical activity messages and supports.
- Connects seniors with their peers to discuss nutrition and healthy living. The [Fresh Conversations Program](#) reaches nearly 2,800 older adults in 113 locations. In 2020, Fresh Conversations moved to virtual instruction and is working on connecting older adults through computer or phone meetings.
- Partners with other state agencies to offer a [farmers market](#) on the Capitol Complex.
- Provides technical assistance to child care providers using [Go NAP SACC](#) to make changes to their nutrition environments.
- Offers breastfeeding promotion and support through the [WIC program](#).

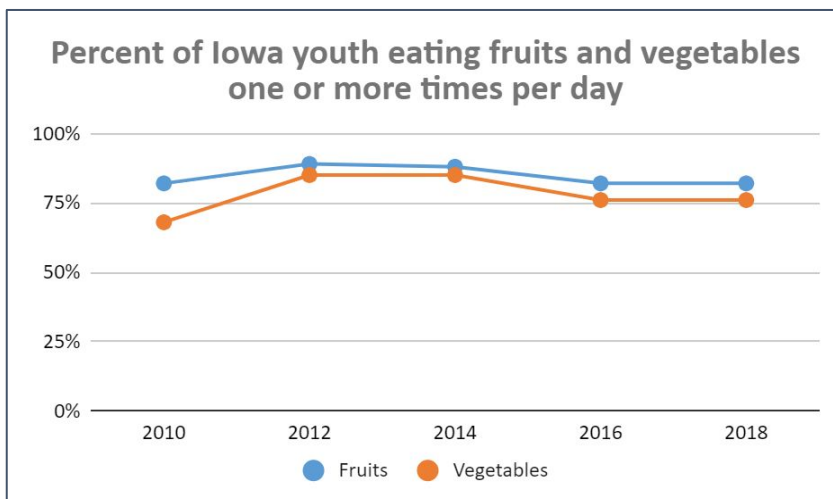
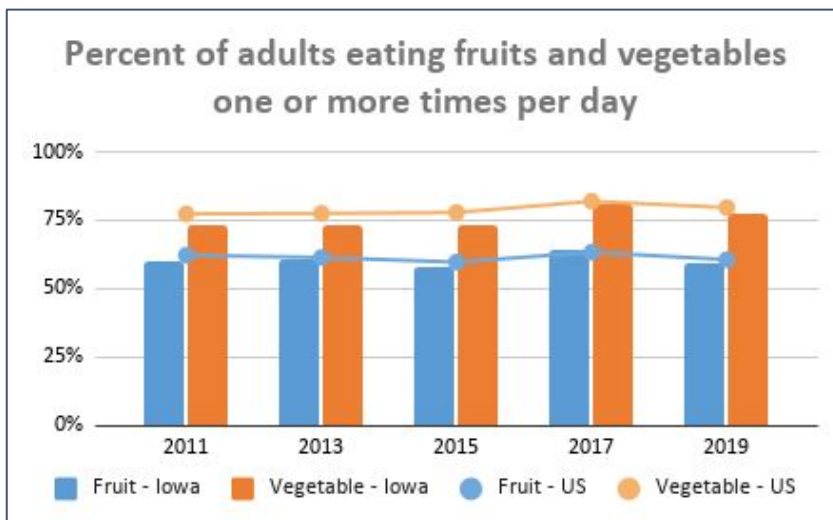


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What can Iowans do to help?

- Partner and support [5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count!](#)
- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables and place fruits and vegetables within reach for a healthy snack.
- Serve on your worksite wellness team to provide healthier food and beverage options for employees.
- Plant a garden or volunteer in your community or school garden.
- Create healthy food options and supportive environments at places where you learn, work, shop, play and live.
- Child care providers register with [Go NAP SACC](#) and go through the five simple steps to make healthy changes to your program.
- Volunteer to facilitate [Fresh Conversations](#) meetings once a month in your community.

How do we measure our progress?



Resources

	SFY 2019 Actual	SFY 2020 Actual	SFY 2021 Estimate
State Funds	\$247,497	\$246,982	\$246,982
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Funds	\$1,349,016	\$1,526,829	\$2,108,349
Total Funds	\$1,596,512	\$1,773,811	\$2,355,331
FTEs	3.93	4.51	4.54