

---

---

# HOW I SPENT MY SUMMER VACATION

## An Update from Iowa's Buy Fresh, Buy Local Campaign

STORY AND PHOTO BY MALLORY SMITH

This summer season began in the spring, when the work that makes the busy summer activities possible was underway. Our eight chapters' oversight committees spent the early months of each year compiling lists of potential members, mailing registration information, soliciting donations, applying for grants, creating databases of current members and supporters, developing a budget and work plan and designing their local food directories. All this, mind you, while ordering seeds and baby chicks, planning menus, running offices and all the other important things these volunteers do in their professional lives.

This year, while all the committees were as busy as they thought possible; a special request was added. Tim Schlitzer, the Executive Director of FoodRoutes Network ([www.FoodRoutes.org](http://www.FoodRoutes.org)), the group that founded Buy Fresh Buy Local came to Iowa June 3 through 13. Each Chapter was assigned a date and asked to plan a full day of events that would best serve their group's needs and provide the public with a great opportunity to learn more about our program. Proving true the adage "if you want something done ask a busy person." The results were impressive.

In his ten-day visit, Tim traveled nearly 3,000 miles in the Buy Fresh Buy Local Mobile—a snazzy blue Prius decked out in colorful images of fresh foods and our eye-catching logo. He visited all the chapters of Buy Fresh Buy Local Iowa and met hundreds of Iowans supportive of family farms, local restaurants and great food. The tour included one parade, numerous local foods dinners, many farm visits, farmers market appearances (including time at the extremely popular Downtown Des Moines Market), stints in grocery store parking lots, meetings with sustainable agriculture workers, funders and researchers, more local foods dinners, presentations to groups small and large, radio and newspaper interviews galore and even a meeting with Iowa's Secretary of Agriculture, Bill Northey.

We made good use of Tim's time and were exemplary in upholding Iowa's reputation for friendliness and hospitality. Tim never had to stay in a hotel because homes were open to him and he certainly never was wanting for something good to eat or drink.

On June 14, Tim left for three weeks in the FoodRoutes office in Pennsylvania leaving us the Buy Fresh Buy Local Mobile to continue to make public appearances. The first week the rounds were made

by Julie Ohde, the Executive Director of Louisa County Conservation who also volunteers for Buy Fresh Buy Local Iowa. Her travels took her to Columbus Junction, Wapello, Waverly, Des Moines, Fairfield and Iowa City where the responses were always enthusiastic or at the very least, inquisitive.

The final two weeks of the road show coincided with the first two weeks of the visit to our household of a Lion's Club exchange student from Mongolia. In the US for the first time, in Iowa for only a matter of hours, and jet-lagged, Bilguun hit the ground running. On his first evening here we attended a picnic hosted by the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Funders Association where he mixed, mingled and even pitched horse shoes. In the days that followed Bilguun and I attended events in Washington, Davenport and Iowa City.

The Prius finally headed back to Des Moines to meet Tim at the airport. The Buy Fresh Buy Local Mobile went back to its owner so he could continue his travels. The next stops were Kansas City, Missouri and points east. The goal was to visit all 50 chapters by summer's end, by which time their might likely be more than 50!

### BUY FRESH BUY IOWA

Buy Fresh, Buy Local Iowa  
Practical Farmers of Iowa, support agency  
([www.PracticalFarmers.org](http://www.PracticalFarmers.org))  
Mallory Smith, statewide coordinator  
[mallorys@lcom.net](mailto:mallorys@lcom.net), 319.627.2922



Tim Schlitzer of FoodRoutes.org (in red) visits with the Quad Cities' Buy Fresh Buy Local Leadership Committee