

HARVEST NATION, INC.

Healthy Eating & Living

ON THE IRON RANGE AND
BOIS FORTE RESERVATIONS

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Healthy Eating & Living on the Iron Range and Bois Forte Reservations December 2019

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Table of Contents

Background.....	page 3
“How was this information gathered?”.....	pages 4-5
General Overview.....	pages 6-11
Community Snapshots.....	pages 12-16
Recommendations from Harvest Nation.....	pages 17-29
Local Resources.....	pages 20-22
Gratitudes and Harvest Nation’s Next Steps.....	page 23
References.....	page 24
S.M.A.R.T. Goal Setting Worksheet.....	page 25



Background / Introduction

Healthy Eating & Living on the Iron Range and Bois Forte Reservations organizes the collective voice of Iron Rangers and Bois Forte reservation residents to identify what is and is not working to support healthy eating and living in our communities.

Where did this project come from?

Harvest Nation Inc. received funding from the Blandin Foundation, with the Iron Range Partnership for Sustainability (IRPS) as its fiscal agent, to complete a feasibility study for a small, indoor aeroponic farm on Lake Vermilion. Harvest Nation is developing the farm to provide affordable access to fresh, high-quality (flavorful and nutritious) vegetables and fruits on the Iron Range. The team wanted to share some of the results publicly as way to give back to the community that participated in our research.

How was the information gathered?

The study conducted interviews, focus groups, talking circles, and two rounds of surveys to gather independent market research for insights about the potential of the farm. Its official title became known as Harvest Nation's Pilot Research Project. More information on our data collection is on page 4 of this report.

Who participated?

Harvest Nation's future pilot farm has the potential to serve the following towns of the eastern part of the Iron Range: Tower/Soudan, Cook, Orr, Nett Lake, Lake Vermilion, Ely, Virginia, or Eveleth. To insure we gathered data that would provide a realistic view of success, we asked participants to self-certify that they are indeed permanent local residents of those towns. They were also required to claim "Head of Household" or "Main Home Food Purchaser" status in the home and be of at least 18 years of age to participate. There were a total of 216 individuals and families who participated in our research.

Why publish the results?

This report fulfills a promise to the Blandin Foundation and research participants to publicize research findings for others to use in honor of Community Based Research (CBR) principles by sharing what we learned.

What can we do with this information?

We highly encourage local community organizations and families to use this booklet to inspire health initiatives. Pages 10-11 identify gaps where our community members are having a hard time maintaining healthy lifestyles in our region. Whatever you, or the organization you represent, can do to support our health by filling those gaps is much appreciated.



How did we gather this information?

Independent Data Collection

Harvest Nation used the Blandin Foundation funding to gather feedback from the community in a few different ways. Having a mixed-method approach allowed us to cross reference results to create an accurate picture of healthy eating and living on the Iron Ranger and at Bois Forte. The methods were:

- A. Interviews
- B. Focus Group & Talking Circle
- C. Mini-Survey (first round)
- D. Final Survey (second round)

Research Participants

In order to be eligible to share in this project, participants were required to self-certify they met the following criteria:

- Head of Household or Main Home Food Purchaser
- Permanent Local Resident of: Tower/Soudan, Cook, Orr, Nett Lake, Lake Vermilion, Ely, Virginia, or Eveleth.
- Age 18+

A. Interviews

The project started with conducting one-on-one interviews with local families. This initial part of the study allowed Harvest Nation to get an in-depth understanding to guide the development of the rest of the study.

B. Focus Group & Talking Circle

We completed a Focus Group at the Natural Harvest Food Co-op in Virginia, MN and a Talking Circle at the Vermilion Government Center on the Lake Vermilion Reservation, near Tower, MN. For cultural appropriateness, we adapted the classic Focus Group method into a *Talking Circle*, where each participant is allowed a turn to speak by passing around a feather. Feedback from these groups were incorporated to develop the Harvest Nation's survey instruments.

C. Mini-Survey (First Round)

The first round of surveys was conducted in late July, 2019. A raffle prize for a \$50.00 Target Gift Card was offered as an incentive. It was called a "Mini-Survey," where respondents gave us 5 minutes of their time to answer the following questions:

1. How do you keep you and your family healthy on the Iron Range?
2. What is one thing you struggle with to maintain a healthy lifestyle?
3. Please pick which fruits and vegetables are appealing to you:

4. How much do you spend weekly on fruits and vegetables?
5. Where do you get your fruits and vegetables? How far do you travel?
6. Are you interested in being a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) customer? (*A CSA is when a farm is supported by shareholders within the community who share both the benefits and risks of food production by purchasing a subscription.*)

Responses to these questions became the basis of the information shared in this document, along with those questions rephrased and resampled in the Final Survey.

D. Final Survey (Second Round)

The second round of surveys was conducted in August and September, 2019. The project adapted the Mini-Survey based on feedback from the Focus Group and Talking Circle. The incentives to participate were a Grand Prize \$500 Gift Card, 2nd Place Prize \$300 Gift Card, and a 3rd Place Prize \$200 Gift Card. The questions asked in the Final Survey were intended to assist in meeting both the goals for this booklet and Harvest Nation's pilot farm operations planning.

Family's Produce Use & Harvest Nation Farm Planning Questions

- How much do you spend on produce a week?
- Please check off what items you eat or are interested in trying on a regular basis: Tomatoes, Carrots, Broccoli, Cucumbers, Bell Peppers, Potatoes, Peas, Edamame, Beans, Herbs.
- Provide up to three other items that you would like us to offer:
- Are you interested in being a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) customer?
- Do you use SNAP?
- Which box would you opt for and what payment plan would be the most convenient for you?
- What would be the most convenient option for us to organize a Farm Stand to meet the days/times/location for your drop-off/pick-up.
- Are you interested in home delivery?
- What can you afford to pay for home delivery at one time?

Lifestyle Questions

- Where do you get information on how to live a healthy lifestyle?
- What do you do for regular exercise?
- What local health facilities, programs, etc. do you use?



General Overview

Using a range of questions, from specific to open-ended, we are grateful to have this assessment to define what *Healthy Eating & Living on the Iron Range and Bois Forte Reservation* looks like for our community at large. For this project, we gathered 216 responses from interviewing and surveying Iron Rangers and Bois Forte reservation residents. This overview is intended to build momentum and model positive habits for the people in our region. “Your neighbors are doing it. You can do it too.” is the message we hope to convey. The project also asked for feedback on what people feel are their barriers to healthy living. By documenting these hardships, the intention is to inspire personal and community action to find solutions to make healthy living easier on the Range.

The General Overview is organized into three parts. Part 1 covers the results of how the community sees and uses food to maintain health, along with what our preferences are for fruits and vegetables in the region. Part 2 compiles the results of the project’s research on what other health habits community members perform to maintain their and their families’ wellbeing. Part 3 takes a look at the intersection of performing multiple healthy habits. Lastly, Part 4 concludes the General Overview with documenting what research participants reported as challenges they encounter in maintaining their health.

Part 1: Healthy Eating Results

The project assumed any person who self-reported “My family and I eat healthy meals” to mean that they generally consume balanced meals with appropriate portion sizes. Many respondents gave additional detail to inform us of what they actually do to guarantee their meals are healthy.



46% of us report using fresh produce to maintain our health!

Food is Medicine. Researches state that having a diet high in nutritional content can prevent disease and increase life expectancy. 46% report they support their health (self and/or family) by using fresh produce. Notably, some replies indicated a more intentional approach about where they get their fruits and vegetables, like buying directly from farmers or growing their own food. 5% of respondents indicated they follow a special diet.

Consume Fresh Produce	Buy Food Directly From Farmers	Shops Organic	Produce Own Food	Gathers Own Food	Follows Special Diet
46%	6%	4%	10%	5%	5%

Where do we get our produce?

A majority of the research respondents reported getting their fruits and vegetables from one place only (61%), like solely shopping at a grocery store to meet all of their household produce needs. The other 39% reported getting their produce from two or more different sources, like using the grocery store while supplementing with home gardening. Most of us get our produce from the grocery store. A lot of the food available in the store is transported from exotic locations due to our cold climate, resulting in a loss of quality and flavor overtime. That is why many go through two or more different avenues for fresher, higher quality produce. Below is a table showing how often many of us use each different avenue. Note that these numbers are each a percentage of the whole and not percentages in direct relationship to one another.

Grocery Stores	Big-Box Stores	Convenience Stores	Farmer's Markets	Personal Gardens	CSAs	Natural Food Stores
76%	19%	2%	19%	10%	6%	21%

6% of the respondents get their produce during the summer and into the fall season through subscription to local Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms. A CSA subscription involves an individual or family buying a share of the produce produced by the farm for a season. CSA members agree to share in both the benefits and risks of food production by purchasing a subscription. CSA users get a weekly box of produce direct from the farm.

Most, if not all, respondents who grow their own food also have to spend cash on other items for a well-rounded diet to supplement their gardening. People typically spend \$41.00 per week from their household budget on produce. The lowest reported weekly produce budget was \$0.00, and the highest \$150.00.



The average weekly produce budget is \$41.00.

TIP! Be mindful of food waste to lighten the burden on your food budget.

What are our favorite produce items?

When you go shopping for produce or are planning your own garden, note that your neighbors are using leafy greens most often to support their healthy eating. This is because leafy greens are a versatile food option. They are the foundation for salads and can be mixed into many different menu options, sautéed or baked or boiled into your favorite dishes.



Leafy greens are the top choice from Harvest Nation's first list of produce items we can start to farm!

TIP! Keeping leafy greens and other produce items stashed in your refrigerator can help build a habit of consuming more fresh and healthy food just by having it readily available in your home.

During the Final Survey, Harvest Nation gauged interest in particular food items that our indoor aeroponic farm could grow to provide local access to peoples' favorites. Across the Range, the most favored produce item from that list are Greens at a rate of 86%. The next in line for a place on our plate are: Tomatoes (71%), Green Beans (69%), Carrots (69%), Cucumbers (68%), Broccoli (68%), Bell Peppers (64%), Red Potatoes (64%), Yukon Gold Potatoes (63%), Peas (62%), Cherry Tomatoes (55%), Onions (55%), Sweet Potatoes (52%), Basil (52%), Cilantro (50%), Dill (42%), Blue Potatoes (42%), Black Beans (36%), Garbanzo Beans (33%), and Edamame as the least popular with an approval rate of 25%.

Other popular produce items:

The research also allowed for participants to write in their favorite produce items instead of choosing from a predetermined list. Many respondents simply said, "all!" which is great to see that some of us aren't picky and can enjoy all varieties of produce. For many respondents, the reality is that most of us do have our favorites. Here is what they are: Berries (73%), Apples (63%), Onions (55%), Bananas (50%), Squash (49%), Melons (49%), Oranges (48%), Cauliflower (47%), Corn (45%), Radish (42%), Grapes (42%), Asparagus (41%), Zucchini (40%), Beets (40%), Cherries (36%), Pineapple (36%), Avocado (34%), Pears (35%), Rutabaga (35%), Kiwi (34%), Garlic (34%), Leek (33%), Grapefruit (33%), Peaches (33%), Plums (33%), Brussel Sprouts (33%), Thyme (32%), Mushrooms (32%), Rhubarb (32%), Dates (32%), Mango (31%) and Turnips (30%).

Top produce items overall:

Combining all responses to both inquiries, favorite items from Harvest Nation's crop list and favorite items at large, we found our region's top favorite produce items: Greens (86%), Berries (73%), Tomatoes (71%), Green Beans (69%), Carrots (69%), Cucumbers (68%), Broccoli (68%), Bell Peppers (64%), Red Potatoes (64%), Apples (63%), Yukon Gold Potatoes (63%), Peas (62%), Cherry Tomatoes (55%), Onions (55%), Sweet Potatoes (52%), Basil (52%), and Bananas (50%).

Part 2: Other Health Habits Results

The project further questioned respondents on non-food related health habits where respondents self-reported performing activities like walking, self-education, using a hospital or clinic for healthy living, and many more.



Beyond making good food choices, 56% report they also perform other habits to maintain their health in our region.

Some of these positive health habits have been passed down through the generations. The love of nature has many of us getting exercise outdoors on hiking trails, or performing lake activities like swimming and kayaking. Others have been pressed to find solace from stress and have built calming habits like meditation or Tai Chi into their routines.

Other than eating, how else do we support our health?

During the Final Survey, we specifically asked people if they engaged in any of the following physical activities. The percentages listed below are those respondents that reported, "Yes," they do perform these activities to stay healthy. Similar to the table on page 7, the numbers in the table below are showing percentages for that specific type of exercise out of the whole. So while 80% of people reported walking as a form of exercise, of that 80% are those who also engage in walking and additional forms of exercise referenced below.

The most popular form of exercise is Walking at a rate of 80%!



Walking	Hiking	Biking	Sports	Skating	Stretching
80%	18%	15%	4%	4%	7%

Running	Cross Country Ski	Fitness Classes	Weights	Swimming	Don't Exercise
8%	11%	10%	15%	5%	6%

We also surveyed community members to see if they normally use any local resources to assist in their health maintenance and improvement. Almost half of the respondents answered that they do not use any structured health program. Though, we do make use of some of the following local resources:

Don't Use a Structured Program	Bois Forte Fitness Centers	Hospitals/Clinics	YMCA	Gather Own Natural Medicines
49%	21%	12%	3%	5%

49% of us do not use a structured health program.

TIP! If you're struggling to meet your health goals, try using a local resource (see page 21 for a listing) to increase your chances for success.



Enlisting extra help can give you tools to work strategically towards your goals, as well as adding more like-minded people into your social circle. The added benefit with having kindred spirits around you is that their personal influence will reaffirm your behaviors and actions in favor of ongoing health maintenance. It can simply make the whole process more enjoyable and less isolating.

Part 3: Full, Healthy Lifestyles

If we consider living a healthy lifestyle as a combination of having healthy eating habits and routinely performing at least one other positive health habit, then **40% of us are achieving healthy lifestyles!** Way to go Iron Rangers and Bois Forte Reservation community members! While it is not always easy to stay steady, and at times we move outside of our healthy intentions, bringing it back to what supports our bodies and families long-term truly has a positive impact on our quality of life.



40% of us are achieving healthy living by eating well in combination with other healthy habits!

For the other 60% of us that are having a hard time maintaining a health regiment, let's look at some of the issues research participants reported as general impediments.

Part 4: Barriers to Health Maintenance

Living in our area can be tough considering our remote, rural location and cold climate. While 76% of us report we are using food to stay healthy, the flipside is that there are 24% of us who are not. And even more of us, 44%, did not report that we perform any other healthy habits. So the question becomes, what are the obstacles we face on the Iron Range and at Bois Forte in trying to eat and live healthy in northern Minnesota? Here are the reasons you listed that are barriers to maintaining a healthy lifestyle.



Stores have limited selections for good, healthy food: 25%



The price of food is too expensive: 26%



Let's face it, we like the taste of junk food: 30%



The distance to get food and cost to travel is a barrier: 25%



Windshield time leaves us no time to cook: 48%

The extreme cold plays a part: 4%

Other bad habits get in the way: 18%



The most reported negative factor is “Windshield time leaves us no time to cook.” where 48% of research respondents stated that we are on the road so much that we routinely opt for convenience foods over healthy snacks and meals. Convenience foods typically are not very healthy, since they are loaded with preservatives for longer shelf life and sugar, fats, and salt to enhance flavor. To overcome this, meal prepping is a trending tool that individuals and families are using to guarantee they have balanced meals throughout the week. It comes with its own added cost of purchasing storage containers, lunchboxes, thermoses, and miscellaneous food prepping supplies.

TIP! You can keep costs down if you buy re-useable containers, making meal prepping a technique that can save you money over time.

Thank you to the brave respondents who provided testimony to the negative habits like smoking, which we see as counteracting our other desire for a healthier life. Kudos to the folks who reported that they have a hard time exercising because they enjoy sedentary activities, or have other health problems that prevent them from engaging in exercise.

TIP! Recognizing barriers and limitations for activities can help us strategize around them and find success by other means. On page 17, Harvest Nation advises using the S.M.A.R.T. system in planning and setting your goals, with a template worksheet for your goal setting provided on page 25.



Community Snapshots

We asked general and open-ended questions to attain the widest array of feedback on what our community members are doing to stay healthy. It seems what works for one family is also working for others since responses were very similar all around. The project compiled survey answers by region to create a community snapshot for each location we studied. Between the Iron Range and Bois Forte responses, there were no significant differences except the travel time to access produce. Bois Forte members travel farther to get their produce, about 60% farther at 70 miles per week instead of 44 miles like the rest of the region.

Lake Vermilion Reservation Community Snapshot

# Participants	48
Age Ranges in Years	25-34 (25%); 35-44 (10%); 45-54 (31%); 55-64 (19%); 65-74 (14%); 75+ (2%)
Household Size	1 (29%); 2 (29%); 3 (4%); 4 (7%); 5 (16%); 6 (7%); 7 (7%), 8+ (0%)
Produce Budget	\$0-\$20 (26%); \$21-\$40 (35%); \$41-\$60 (26%); \$61-\$80 (4%); \$81-\$100 (9%); \$101+ (0%)
Distance to Access Produce (in miles)	<1 (0%); 1-10 (0%); 11-20 (21%); 21-30 (7%); 31-40 (0%); 41-50 (14%); 51-60 (43%); 61+ (14%)
Healthy Eating Habits	Consumes fresh produce (36%); Preps food at home (12%)
Other Healthy Habits	Performs regular exercise (60%)
Barriers to Healthy Lifestyle	Access (10%), Price (19%), Distance (17%), Convenience (23%), Prefers Taste of Junk Food (10%), Dislikes Exercise (15%), Winter Limitation (0%)

Nett Lake Reservation Community Snapshot

# Participants	27
Age Ranges	25-34 (4%); 35-44 (11%); 45-54 (4%); 55-64 (19%); 65-74 (15%); 75+ (0%)
Household Size	1 (25%); 2 (25%); 3 (5%); 4 (5%); 5 (30%); 6 (0%); 7 (0%); 8+ (10%)
Produce Budget	\$0-\$20 (31%); \$21-\$40 (31%); \$41-\$60 (31%); \$61-\$80; (0%); \$81-\$100 (8%); \$101+ (0%)
Distance to Access Produce (in miles)	<1 (0%); 1-10 (0%); 11-20 (0%); 21-30 (0%); 31-40 (8%); 41-50 (0%); 51-60 (8%); 61+ (85%)
Healthy Eating Habits	Consumes fresh produce (16%); Preps food at home (12%)
Other Healthy Habits	Performs regular exercise (15%)
Barriers to Healthy Lifestyle	Access (4%), Price (10%), Distance (10%), Convenience (15%), Prefers Taste of Junk Food (13%), Dislikes Exercise (8%), Winter Limitation (0%)

Tower/Soudan Community Snapshot

# Participants	31
Age Ranges	25-34 (13%); 35-44 (29%); 45-54 (26%); 55-64 (10%); 65-74 (10%); 75+ (3%)
Household Size	1 (24%); 2 (36%); 3 (6%); 4 (18%); 5 (6%); 6 (0%); 7 (6%); 8+ (0%)
Produce Budget	\$0-\$20 (32%); \$21-\$40 (47%); \$41-\$60 (5%); \$61-\$80; (5%); \$81-\$100 (11%); \$101+ (5%)
Distance to Access Produce (in miles)	<1 (14%); 1-10 (0%); 11-20 (0%); 21-30 (5%); 31-40 (14%); 41-50 (5%); 51-60 (62%); 61+ (0%)
Healthy Eating Habits	Consumes fresh produce (50%); Preps food at home (9%)
Other Healthy Habits	Performs regular exercise (36%)
Barriers to Healthy Lifestyle	Access (39%), Price (22%), Distance (22%), Convenience (48%), Prefers Taste of Junk Food (43%), Dislikes Exercise (9%), Winter Limitation (4%)

Cook Community Snapshot

# Participants	17
Age Ranges	25-34 (0%); 35-44 (41%); 45-54 (35%); 55-64 (18%); 65-74 (6%); 75+ (0%)
Household Size	1 (14%); 2 (29%); 3 (14%); 4 (14%); 5 (21%); 6 (7%); 7 (0%); 8+ (0%)
Produce Budget	\$0-\$20 (40%); \$21-\$40 (40%); \$41-\$60 (0%); \$61-\$80; (0%); \$81-\$100 (20%); \$101+ (0%)
Distance to Access Produce (in miles)	<1 (20%); 1-10 (0%); 11-20 (0%); 21-30 (5%); 31-40 (20%); 41-50 (40%); 51-60 (20%); 61+ (0%)
Healthy Eating Habits	Consumes fresh produce (60%); Prepares food at home (20%)
Other Healthy Habits	Performs regular exercise (80%)
Barriers to Healthy Lifestyle	Access (20%), Price (20%), Distance (20%), Convenience (80%), Prefers Taste of Junk Food (40%), Dislikes Exercise (20%), Winter Limitation (0%)

Orr Community Snapshot

# Participants	10
Age Ranges	25-34 (20%); 35-44 (20%); 45-54 (20%); 55-64 (30%); 65-74 (10%); 75+ (0%)
Household Size	1 (33%); 2 (0%); 3 (33%); 4 (22%); 5 (11%); 6 (0%); 7 (0%); 8+ (0%)
Produce Budget	*Lack of data, two reports of \$0 and \$15 per week.
Distance to Access Produce (in miles)	*Lack of data, two reports of driving 50 miles or more.
Healthy Eating Habits	*Lack of data, two reports of consuming fresh produce; *Lack of data, one report of eating in moderation.
Other Healthy Habits	*All respondents reported engaging in some form of regular physical exercise.
Barriers to Healthy Lifestyle	*Lack of data, only two reports of enjoying sedentary activities.

Ely Community Snapshot

# Participants	31
Age Ranges	25-34 (6%); 35-44 (13%); 45-54 (16%); 55-64 (26%); 65-74 (26%); 75+ (6%)
Household Size	1 (19%); 2 (46%); 3 (12%); 4 (19%); 5 (4%); 6 (0%); 7 (0%); 8+ (0%)
Produce Budget	\$0-\$20 (19%); \$21-\$40 (31%); \$41-\$60 (13%); \$61-\$80; (13%); \$81-\$100 (25%); \$101+ (0%)
Distance to Access Produce (in miles)	<1 (70%); 1-10 (0%); 11-20 (0%); 21-30 (0%); 31-40 (5%); 41-50 (40%); 51-60 (20%); 61+ (25%)
Healthy Eating Habits	Consumes fresh produce (53%); Produces own food (16%)
Other Healthy Habits	Performs regular exercise (21%)
Barriers to Healthy Lifestyle	Access (40%), Price (25%), Distance (25%), Convenience (30%), Prefers Taste of Junk Food (15%), Dislikes Exercise (20%), Winter Limitation (10%)

Virginia Community Snapshot

# Participants	39
Age Ranges	18-24 (3%); 25-34 (33%); 35-44 (26%); 45-54 (3%); 55-64 (15%); 65-74 (18%); 75+ (3%)
Household Size	1 (21%); 2 (30%); 3 (15%); 4 (21%); 5 (6%); 6 (3%); 7 (0%); 8+ (0%)
Produce Budget	\$0-\$20 (47%); \$21-\$40 (29%); \$41-\$60 (12%); \$61-\$80; (6%); \$81-\$100 (6%); \$101+ (0%)
Distance to Access Produce (in miles)	<1 (59%); 1-10 (24%); 11-20 (12%); 21-30 (0%); 31-40 (0%); 41-50 (0%); 51-60 (0%); 61+ (6%)
Healthy Eating Habits	Consumes fresh produce (53%); Eats in moderation (16%); Produces own food (16%)
Other Healthy Habits	Performs regular exercise (47%)
Barriers to Healthy Lifestyle	Access (0%), Price (16%), Distance (16%), Convenience (68%), Prefers Taste of Junk Food (26%), Dislikes Exercise (26%), Winter Limitation (0%)

Eveleth Community Snapshot

# Participants	4
Age Ranges	*Small range of data: 25-34 (50%); 35-44 (50%)
Household Size	*Small range of data: 1 (25%); 3 (25%); 5 (25%); 6 (25%)
Produce Budget	*Lack of data, one report of \$30 per week.
Distance to Access Produce (in miles)	*Lack of data, one report of 1 mile or less.
Healthy Eating Habits	*Lack of data, one report of using food as a means to maintain their good health
Other Healthy Habits	*Small range of data, three out of four respondents report walking as a means of regular exercise.
Barriers to Healthy Lifestyle	*Lack of data, one report of preferring the taste of junk food and its convenience as a barrier.



Recommendations from Harvest Nation:

Our research has determined that the following are the “Keys to Success” in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. We have incorporated ideas from our study that can make it easier for you to start and stay on track with personal, family, and community health goals.

- **Involve Family & Friends**

- The common phrase “you are who you hang with” still holds true from the conversations we engaged in during this investigation. Time and again, it was reaffirmed that individual’s immediate social circles (family, friends, and colleagues) have a heavy influence on shaping healthy and not-so-healthy habits.
 - A 2014 study in the Journal of Consumer Research found that who you surround yourself with greatly influences your choices. See this website for a quick overview of the study: https://www.press.uchicago.edu/pressReleases/2014/May/0522JC_Rlowe.html
 - **Recommended Action Item**
 - ***Tap into each other for strength and support.*** Our fellow Iron Rangers and Bois Forters are a wealth of knowledge and help can be just a referral away. Reach out to the people you have right around you. Ask what they do to stay healthy. See what you have in common and where you can help each other.

- **Make a Goal**

- Goal setting is great motivation. Many responses in the research were along the lines of “I try to eat/stay health....” While it is certainly a positive to try, and try again, we know it can be hard to feel satisfied with our attempts if we are not sure if we are seeing any progress. Setting a goal and measuring our progress can lead us along so that our “trys” are consistently headed in a significant direction.
- **Recommended Action Item**
 - The goal setting technique Harvest Nation recommends using is the S.M.A.R.T. system, which has become popular since it keeps your goal setting practical for achievable results. It is an acronym for the following tips in setting your goals. A template worksheet is provided on page 25.

- **S:** Be (S)pecific. The goal should be well defined so that your end result is clear and motivating. For instance, “I want to exercise 6 days a week.”
- **M:** The goal should be (M)easurable. For instance, if you wish to drink more water, you can measure your goal by counting your water intake to guarantee you meet the recommended 8 glasses of water per day.
- **A:** It needs to be (A)chievable. Ask yourself if the goal you have is realistic considering your set of circumstances, resources, and potential limitations.
- **R:** Is your goal (R)elevant? Does it have enough meaning to keep driving you forward?
- **T:** Time-bound. You should define a date by when you would like to achieve your goal. After you set the end date, work backwards to hone your strategy by setting monthly, weekly, and daily goals for certain behaviors that you know will guarantee your success.

- **Make a Plan**

- **Goals without plans are dreams.** To make your health dream a reality, it is recommended to plan it out using the S.M.A.R.T. system noted above. Not everything will go according to plan, though having a plan will help you sort through resources to best prepare you to carry out the behaviors necessary to support your health. Having a good plan will enable you to trust the process when the going gets hard.

- **Recommended Action Item**

- **Make a healthy eating/meal plan:** If your goal is to eat healthy, inspect that goal a little bit further to define what a healthy diet means to you. Harvest Nation recommends that you meet with your nutritionist or your doctor to work out a plan that is best for you. Whatever the scenario, creating a menu for yourself and family empowers you to make healthy food choices, instead of eating on a whim where the convenience options beckons and sabotages your health goals.



- **Check out www.ChooseMyPlate.gov to learn about nutrition and meal planning.** If nothing else, refer to their infographic on the left to make sure your meals consist of the food groups into those sized portions relative to one another on your plate.

- **Make an exercise plan:** Harvest Nation also recommends that you meet with your primary care doctor to make an exercise plan. While you may be very motivated to see progress in your physical wellbeing, overextending yourself with too much activity too soon can be very dangerous. If you are fairly healthy to begin with, you can start putting in walking into your routine, starting with 10 minutes a day.

- **Keep it Fun**
 - **Join a fitness club!** The YMCA in Virginia, MN offers fitness classes, as other health facilities across the Iron Range. Sliding fee schedules may be available.
- **Keep it Easy**
 - **Start walking or biking instead of driving to run errands and get together with your loved ones.** Get out and explore nature where it is convenient, using trails, parks and open space. And if you experience barriers to walking and biking, share ways to improve with policy makers and other governmental organizations like Public Health and Parks and Recreation. See page 23 for Local Trails recommendations.
- **Keep it Affordable**
 - **Use YouTube! Use the Library!** If you have internet at home, there are millions of home exercise videos to choose from, for free. Otherwise, you can visit your local library to check out a book or exercise video on the kind of exercise you want to perform and teach yourself.
- **Reach out for Help**
 - **Contact your elected officials to support systems changes in favor of local food!** Your selling point can be this reference from the Local Food as An Economic Driver in the Taconite Assistance Area: ***“Localizing food production and consumption for the Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation service area (hereafter referred to as the Agency service area and/or the Taconite Assistance Area) will add between 250 and 3500 jobs in agriculture and value-added processing to our region, retain between \$51 million and \$256 million annually in food dollars within the region, and have substantial economic spillover effects to related businesses. These impacts of localizing the purchase of food under a range of scenarios point to the need to continue activities to support the development of local food systems in the region”*** (Executive Summary, page 1). To access this full document for free online, find the link on the Iron Range Partnership for Sustainability (IRPS) website that covers Local Food in our region: <https://www.irpsmn.org/localfood>. The website also has a full listing of extra resources from meal prepping tips, area farmer’s market schedules, and local food networks to engage with.
 - **Use a Local Resource to increase your chances for success.** A listing is provided on page 20. Changing behavior, or even improving on a current one, is a very hard thing to do. The more resources you can pull in around you and your family, the better your chances for success along the way.

Local Resources

HEALTH/NUTRITION/DIET RELATED

Where to go?

Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)
St. Louis County Public Health & Human Services
Government Services Center
201 South 3rd Avenue West
P.O. Box 1148
Virginia, MN 55792-1148.
Phone: 218-471-7100 or 800-450-9777; Fax: 218-742-9503

Bois Forte Health Services
Services generally limited to Bois Forte Band members and their families.
*Diabetes Program, *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
<http://www.boisforte.com/divisions/health.htm>

Nett Lake Clinic
5219 St. John's Drive
Nett Lake, MN 55772
Phone: 218-757-3650; Fax: 218-757-0222

Lake Vermilion Clinic
1613 Farm Point Road S.
Tower, MN 55790
Phone: 218-753-2182; Fax: 218-753-2183

Juniper, local online program search:

“Through a network of local leaders, community organizations and health systems, Juniper delivers programs to help adults manage chronic health conditions, prevent falls, and foster well-being. If you are coping with high blood pressure, heart disease, COPD, arthritis, diabetes or other chronic conditions, Juniper can support your efforts to live life as fully and independently as possible.”

<https://yourjuniper.org/>

What to read?

My Plate – USDA Nutrition Toolkit Resources

“Tips, ideas, and personalized plan[s] to meet food group targets, find out what works for you and your family within your food preferences, health goals, and budget.”

My Plate Resource - University of Minnesota

<https://extension.umn.edu/customized-education/myplate-my-family>

My Plate - USDA

<https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/nutrition-education/fns-curricula/myplate-my-family>

10 Tips for My Plate

<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/ten-tips-choose-myplate>

FOOD/FARM RELATED

The Rutabaga Project

“Goal is to craft community-based solutions to make produce more accessible and affordable.”

www.irpsmn.org/rutabagaproject/

702 South 3rd Avenue W.

Virginia, MN 55792

Phone: 218-404-8466

Arrowhead Grown – Farmers’ Market Directory

www.arrowheadgrown.org

Food as an Economic Driver: A Study of the Potential Impact of Local Foods in the Taconite Assistance Area, Iron Range Partnership for Sustainability, University of Minnesota Extension. 2018.

www.irpsmn.org/localfood

Minnesota Farmers Union

“MFU works to protect and enhance the economic interests and quality of life of family farmers, ranchers, and rural communities.”

www.mfu.org

305 Roselawn Ave E #200

St. Paul, MN 55117

Phone: 651-639-1223

Land Stewardship Project

“Fostering an ethic of stewardship for farmland, promoting sustainable agriculture and developing healthy communities.”

*Has Beginner Farmer resources and workshops

www.landstewardshipproject.org

821 E 35th Street #200

Minneapolis, MN 55407

Phone: 612-722-6377

EXERCISE/FITNESS RELATED

Where to go?

Healthy Northland – Area Map

“Use to find places where you can be more active. Parks, trails, fitness centers and more.”

www.healthynorthland.org/map/

YMCA

8367 Unity Drive

Virginia, MN 55792

Phone: 218-749-8020

Vermilion Family Wellness Center

1615 Farm Point Road S.

Tower, MN 55790

Phone: 218-753-2843

Native Hearts Fitness Center

13085 Nett Lake Road

Nett Lake, MN 55772

Phone: 218-757-3261 *Ask the receptionist to you to transfer to the fitness center.

Local Trails Recommended from Research Participants:

Tower/Soudan Bike Path, Bass Lake Trail, Trezona, Vermilion Walk Way, Bailey’s Lake, Big Aspen for Cross-Country Skiing, Mesabi Trail

What to get involved in?

Mesabi Outdoor Adventures (MOA)

<https://www.facebook.com/mesabioutdooradventures/>

Recent post by MOA: *“We purchased several other bikes, including 2 fat bikes and 6 pairs of snowshoes and trekking poles and a few other things. More updates on those recent developments and others in the near future. We plan to have our website up and running by the end of October and will fundraise this winter so we can purchase canoes and kayaks by next spring and continue to bring dynamic outdoor programming to The Iron Range Community.”*

Project Get Outdoors (GO)

“Helping kids experience, explore, and get outdoors!”

www.mnprojectgo.org

P.O. Box 244

Wabasha, MN 55981

Phone: 507-952-5885

Email: sara.grover@yahoo.com

Gratitudes & Harvest Nation's next steps

Chi miigwech (*Thank you very much* in Ojibwe Language) to all project participants, technical advisors, volunteers and cheerleaders! Harvest Nation is completing a feasibility study to start our first indoor aeroponic farm. We are raising capital through pitching our project idea to different funding agencies to start a pilot program operation to demonstrate our proof of concept.

Blandin Foundation – Project Funder

Grant Director Sonja Merrild and Grant Program Staff, along with Interview Grant Request Review Committee

Iron Range Partnership for Sustainability (IRPS) – Fiscal Agent

Executive Director Melissa Roach and IRPS Board of Directors

The Rutabaga Project

Project Manager Kelsey Gantzer

Harvest Nation Board of Directors

Denise Pieraos, CEO

Tracey Dagen, COO

Nicole Love (Pieratos), Treasurer

Harvest Nation Advisory Board

Mary Lundeen and Pat Campanaro (UMD Center for Economic Development SBC)

Michael Lattery, Miranda Kishel, Michael Montgomery, Stephen Peterson, and Sandi Larson (Entrepreneur Fund)

David Abazs (Northeast Regional Sustainable Development Partnership)

Brian Bluhm (Minnesota Statewide Health Improvement Partnership)

Marcy McGleno (Community Representative)

Melissa Roach (IRPS)

Kevin Ortenblad (Lettuce Abound)

For Utmost Hospitality for our Focus Group/Community Meeting Venues:

Vermilion Government Center

Kristin Hendrickson

Natural Harvest Food Co-op

Briana Sterle

Ely Tuesday Group

Steve Chron

Steve Piragis

Barbara Jones

References

Abazs, David, and Ryan Pesch. Food as an Economic Driver: A Study of the Potential Impact of Local Foods in the Taconite Assistance Area, Iron Range Partnership for Sustainability. *University of Minnesota Extension*. 2018. (<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5829dc7ad482e98c45949d85/t/5b589f330e2e723fea13fe15/1532534591246/Local+Food+as+an+Economic+Driver-min.pdf>. Accessed 9/20/19).

Lowe, Michael L. and Kelly L. Haws. "(Im)moral Support: The Social Outcomes of Parallel Self-Control Decisions." *Journal of Consumer Research*: August 2014.

S.M.A.R.T. GOALS WORKSHEET

Crafting S.M.A.R.T. Goals are designed to help you identify if what you want to achieve is realistic and determine a deadline. When writing S.M.A.R.T. Goals use concise language, but include relevant information. These are designed to help you succeed, so be positive when answering the questions.

INITIAL GOAL	Write the goal you have in mind
S SPECIFIC	What do you want to accomplish? Who needs to be included? When do you want to do this? Why is this a goal?
M MEASURABLE	How can you measure progress and know if you've successfully met your goal?
A ACHIEVABLE	Do you have the skills required to achieve the goal? If not, can you obtain them? What is the motivation for this goal? Is the amount of effort required on par with what the goal will achieve?
R RELEVANT	Why am I setting this goal now? Is it aligned with overall objectives?
T TIME-BOUND	What's the deadline and is it realistic?
SMART GOAL	Review what you have written, and craft a new goal statement based on what the answers to the questions above have revealed

This worksheet is provided through an online resource. It is available at <https://www.smartsheet.com/blog/essential-guide-writing-smart-goals> with additional helpful goal setting tips to assist with this worksheet.