



# DANE COUNTY

**Kathleen M. Falk**

County Executive

## **For Immediate Release**

DATE: July 17, 2008

Contacts: Joshua Wescott, Office of the County Executive (608) 267-8823 or cell (608) 669-5606; Olivia Parry, Director, International Food Market Coalition; (608) 266-4270

## **Dane County Partnership to Benefit from State Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin Grant**

*Dollars to Make it Easier to Access Locally Grown, Organic Produce*

The Institutional Food Market Coalition (IFM), a project of the Dane County Planning and Development Department, in partnership with the Badgerland Produce Co-op Auction is pleased to announce a \$46,540 grant award from the new Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin Program. The Dane County partnership is one of only seven in the state to benefit from the first grants issued by this Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection program.

“These grant dollars will make it easier to connect customers with the great, organic produce raised by our local growers,” County Executive Kathleen Falk said.

IFM was established in 2006 in an effort to expand market opportunities for Dane County and regional producers, and to connect large volume institutional buyers from both private and public sector institutions with local and organically grown Wisconsin product. Through outreach and education, IFM works to identify buyers interested in sourcing locally, and to recruit new growers to sell their products through Badgerland.

After action by the County Executive, four Dane County institutions serving approximately 6,000 meals a day started purchasing locally grown and organic food through Badgerland in 2007. As a result of their overwhelmingly positive experiences with the auction, all four will return for the 2008 growing season.

“Through buying local for county facilities like the county nursing home and county jail, Dane County is leading by example and saving money,” County Executive Kathleen Falk said.

In 2008, and in response to IFM’s efforts, demand from institutional sales is projected to increase to 225,000 pounds of local and organic Wisconsin produce. Also this year, Badgerland is piloting a pre-priced program for those institutions interested in sourcing significant volumes, and that require set prices, throughout the growing season.

For more information about IFM or opportunities for buying or selling through auction, contact Olivia Parry, IFM Coordinator, at 608-266-4270, or [parry@co.dane.wi.us](mailto:parry@co.dane.wi.us), or Matt Robertson, IFM Marketing Specialist, at 608-266-6389, or [roberston@co.dane.wi.us](mailto:roberston@co.dane.wi.us).