



# Making a Difference

2016 – 2017

## Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health Program Focus Team Building Access to Healthy Foods

### Grand Challenges

K-State Research and Extension: providing education you can trust to help people, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future.

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### Situation

Food systems that provide healthful foods to Kansas communities, support and sustain healthy communities and strong local economies. The food system cycle from production to consumption to waste management has a profound affect on eating behaviors and, in turn, community health outcomes. To build and sustain a healthy food system, community partnerships are vital and should include stakeholders from public, private, and nonprofit sectors and represent a wide array of interests, including nutrition, health, agriculture, education, policy, community design, and commerce.

### What We Did

K-State Research and Extension continues to work with local health and wellness coalitions, school wellness committees, food policy councils, and other entities to develop policy and systems changes that create healthy food environments in schools, communities, and public venues.

### Outcomes

- 67.7 percent (21/31) Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health members reported that they will attend Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) interventions related training
- 41.9 percent (13/31) reported that they currently participate in a food policy council or similar organization.
- 67.7 percent report they are already implementing or plan to implement PSE change strategies.
- 33 Kansas counties have formed a food policy council and another nine counties are in the process of forming a food policy council.

### Success Story

A priority project from the 2015 food system assessment by Eat Well Crawford County was to increase production of food to be consumed locally. The task force, Growing Growers, partnered with a local vocational training center, extension and the local food pantry to purchase and construct a high tunnel. The tunnel was put into production, educational sessions were provided by extension and the produce went to the local food bank where SNAP-Ed educators provided recipes for the produce. The vocational training center plans to offer agriculture courses for high school and community college credit.

K-State Research and Extension, Cherokee County personnel partnered with the Columbus Unified School District in order to improve access to fresh fruits and vegetables to both the elementary students and community members. Youth in the Summer Boost Program at Highland Elementary assisted in planting and harvesting a Growing Health Futures Garden. Produce from the garden was donated to the Columbus Summer Free Lunch program, utilized for snacks within the school, and students were able to take home fresh vegetables to their families.