

# First Impressions

## Spearville, KS

K-State Research and Extension in Partnership  
with  
The Dane G. Hansen Foundation



- Bucklin asked for First Impressions, we obtained Spearville as its partner.
- We trained the volunteers on April 22 and took photos of Spearville on May 10.
- Bucklin visitors visited in separate cars.
- Results are presented tonight, July 16.
- Spearville uses the results for further discussion and action plans.

- **Feedback:**

How does a first-time visitor view my town?

- Evaluate successes,
- Set goals and priorities for next steps.

- **If you don't agree with the observation:**

- *Be curious*, Why does the visitor see it this way?
- Is the observation worth considering?
- What can we do to change it– or the perception?

**Curiosity: A strong desire to know or learn something.**

*-Oxford Living Dictionary*

**Ben Winchester, Senior Research Fellow, U of MN**

***We need to change the narrative about rural.***

- Rural is *changing*, not dying.
- Brain Gain (30-49 year olds moving to rural) is a “new trend” that has been happening since the 70’s and no one is noticing or talking about it.
- Only 36% lived there previously.
- People research a number of places before they move to a rural town.
- Rural is in the middle of ***everywhere***. You live one place, work another and play another. With transportation and internet, it’s all accessible to you.

## Ben Winchester, Senior Research Fellow, U of MN

- 46% of Kansans move every year.
- In a survey of newcomers to rural areas, the reasons they come are:
  - Simpler pace of life
  - Safety and Security
  - Low housing cost
  - *“A job,” isn’t in the top 10 reasons.*
- “In small towns everyone knows each other.” *false*
- *Get to know each other*, invite them to a newcomers meal.

- If you bring 7 people to a 700 citizen town every year in 10 years you'll have a 10% increase. It matters! It is a challenge with housing, but it is achievable.
- We are our own worst enemies. We have to monitor our customer service and what we say. It matters.
- Don't say, "You have to live here twenty years to be an insider." And don't act like it either.

- 75% of rural homeowners are Baby Boomers and older. 30% are over 75.
- Housing will be freed up as the baby boomers retire and move closer to medical services.
- Rural communities need retirement housing (not nursing facilities, but maintenance free) to retain seniors.- *Ben Winchester, Senior Research Fellow, University of Minnesota*



*Ben Winchester was our guest on the  
**March 1, 2019 First Friday Call.***

*See the recording at:*

<https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/business/entrepreneurship/>

- 2010 Census Population 773  
(down 4.9% since 2000\*) **KS= +6.1%**
- 2017 Estimate is 793  
(UP 22.6% since 2000 **KS= +8.0%**)
- 97.4% high school or GED, 41.4% college educated,  
– **90.5% HS or equivalency, KS 32.3% college education,**
- Poverty rate 1.3% **(KS=12.8%)**
- Median Age 34.7 years **(36.3)**
- Median household income is \$84,145\*\* **(\$55,477)**

\* 2000 Census was 813    \*\*American Community Survey 5-Year estimate

- **Website** <http://www.spearville.org/>
- Links to useful sites: Wind Farms Commercial locations and community.
- *The page is probably not updated locally as the front page shows spring clean-up, the City Minutes are posted through March and the calendar only shows cyclical events.*

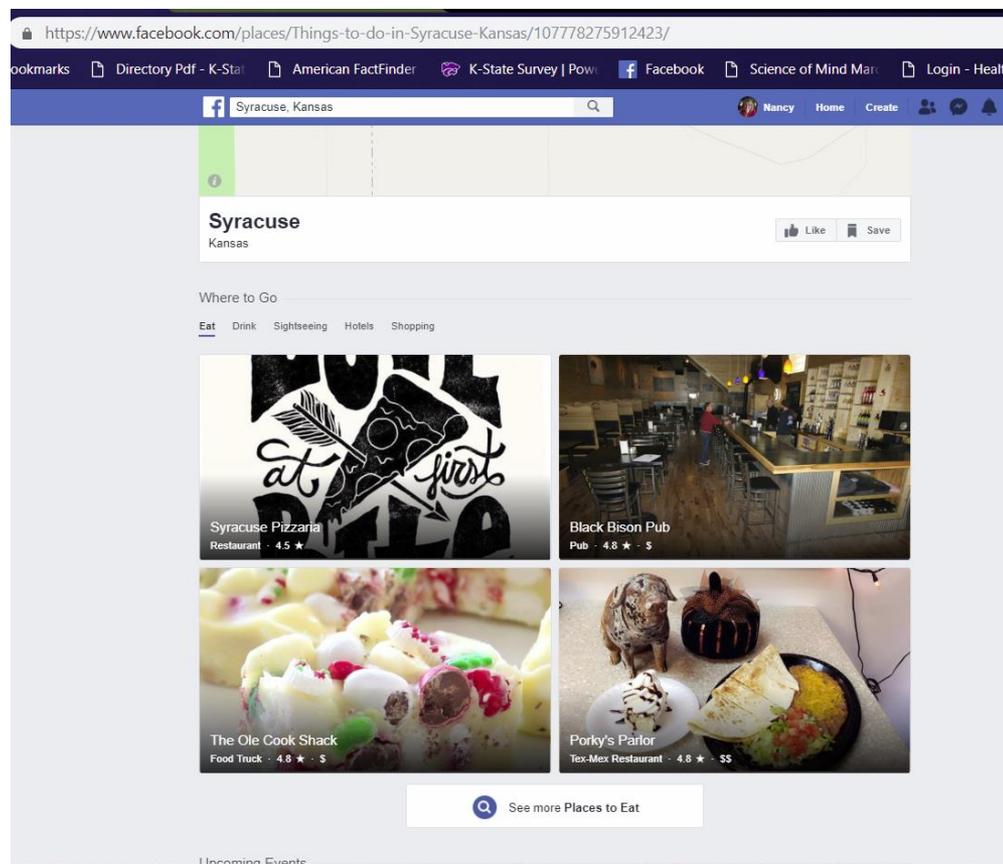


- **FaceBook**

Spearville Kansas *A Facebook generated page.*

*Others:*

- *The Windmill*
- *St. John the Baptist*
- *Spearville Fire Dept*
- *Spearville Jr/Sr High*



- City is clean and all yards were mowed.
- In approach from the south, did not notice any “Spearville.”
- Places where visitors will go could use more signs: City Hall, parks, ballfields, health center.



# “Five-Minute” Impression



- Co-op building is very old and faded.
- The depot needs repair.



- Not many retail businesses.



- Nice to see updates going on: construction at the bank and repairs at the bandshell.
- Sad to see local grocery closing.



- North entry is dominated by the railroad and pipe supplies.













- Noticed a few benches here and there, but did not explore public restrooms or wi-fi.

# Other Retail Shopping Areas

- *Convenience store is on the highway.*



# Industrial Parks/Commercial

- Industrial locations on both sides of Main Street.



- *Although visitors believed there was more room there, your leadership team said there is not.*

## ***Observation:***

- “Entrepreneurs who choose to start their small businesses are responsible for 63 percent of net new jobs created in the United States every year.”
- *Global marketing makes your town accessible to purchases all over the world.*

- There is no hospital, but a medical clinic operated by Hodgeman County hospital.
- Visitors had difficulty locating this asset.



- There is no assisted living, but a retirement village at Park View in the former hospital.
- Visitors heard of plans to build long term care homes.



- All homes were well kept and attractive, many are brick.







- We saw only one “for sale” house.



- The city clerk keeps a list of rentals and houses for sale, along with a list of utilities.
- Rentals appear to be adequate.



## KANSAS

- Total Housing Units 363
- Total Occupied Houses 333 (91.7%) (89.1%)
- Vacant Houses 30 ( 8.3%) (10.7%)

*\*In 2010, there were 300 occupied housing units*

- Owner Occupied 279 (83.8%) (66.4%)
- Renter Occupied 54 (16.2%) (33.6%)
- Family Households 81.7% (65.4%)
- Non-family Household 18.3% (34.6%)

- Buildings are very well kept, even dazzling.



- The playground showed investment by Feist Foundation.
- There is a preschool next to the health care center that looked cute.



- Online information was informative.
- It listed all activities.
- Color photos of sporting events were included.
- *Be aware that the page is also used by potential new residents to help them picture their children attending here.*

The screenshot displays the Spearville Schools website. At the top, there is a blue header with the "LANCERS" logo and "SPEARVILLE SCHOOLS" text. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for District, Elementary, MS-HS, Parents, Community, and Staff. The main content area features a large photograph of two softball players in blue uniforms on a field. Below the photo, there are three columns: "News" with an "Online! ENROLLMENT" announcement, "Calendar" showing a weekly schedule of school events from Monday, July 16 to Tuesday, July 23, and "Quicklinks" with buttons for "Online Payment-RowTrack", "PowerSchool", "BOE Approved 2019-2020 Calendar", "School Supply List-Elementary", "School Supply List-MS-HS", "Sports Physical Form", "Kindergarten Readiness Survey (Ages & Stages Questionnaire)", "Career Cruising", "AR Book Locator", "Spearville Elementary YouTube", and "2018-19 Yearbook Order Form". The footer contains contact information for Spearville Schools, USD 581 District, and MS-HS, along with a "Sign up for the Newsletter" button and a "Select Language" dropdown.

## Comments:

- Child care is offered in homes and tough to find.

## Ford County Data:

- **Number of Children Under Age 6:** **3,851**
- **Children with all parents in the workforce:** **55%**
- **Desired Capacity of Child Care Centers** **683**
- **Extent that desired capacity meets potential need** **32%**
- **Creating a Child Care Action Plan**

<https://ks.childcareaware.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Draft-Child-Care-Supply-Demand-Action-Plan.pdf>

*Contact [ks.childcareaware.org](http://ks.childcareaware.org) to get access to local child care specialists.  
785-823-3343*

- There are 3 churches in Spearville, the Catholic church is the largest.



- The Parish Center provides a lovely venue for events.



- Civic groups and activity were not apparent to visitors.
- *A nice Senior Center is downtown.*



- *Streets, sidewalks and signs are not of uniform quality.*



- More signage would help visitors locate the schools, ball parks, playgrounds, health clinic and main downtown areas from the north.



*Evidence of new sidewalks and curbs*

- City Clerk, Tammy Konrade was gracious and answered a lot of questions.



# Fire, EMS and Police Services

- Chief of Police gave friendly directions to City Hall.



Otherservices/iso.php

Flickr BCBKSKS Beth Funk - Facts Calculators & Conve Google Great Life Rates Rewards Science of the Mind Shipping Address - R Topeka and Shawnee amazon.com Eric

Welcome to Kansas Insurance Department Home Contact Us search GO

**Kansas Insurance Commissioner**



Kansas Insurance Department  
420 SW 9th Street  
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1678  
Consumer Hotline: 800-432-2484 (KS only)  
[Email Us](#) | Phone: 785-296-3071



> The Department
> Auto/Home
> Health/Life
> Insurance Fraud & Education
> Agent/Agency Services
> Company Services
> Other Services

HOME : ISO

## ISO Public Protection Classification

Most U.S. Insurers of home and business properties use Insurance Services Office's (ISO) Property Protection Classification (PPC) in calculating premiums. In general, the price of insurance in a community with a good PPC is lower than in a community with a poor PPC, assuming all other factors are equal.

PPC Program: <https://www.isomitigation.com/program-works/how-the-ppc-program-works.html>

A community's PPC depends on:

1. Emergency communications systems, including facilities for the public to report fires, staffing, training, certification of telecommunicators, and facilities for dispatching fire departments
2. The fire department, including equipment, staffing, training, and geographic deployment of fire companies
3. The water supply system, including the inspection and flow testing of hydrants and a careful evaluation of the amount of available water compared with the amount needed to suppress fires
4. Community efforts to reduce the risk of fire, including fire prevention codes and enforcement, public fire



- The library is busy and well-stocked.
- There was a nice table display in the back with newer offerings. Liked the play area in the front for kids.



- City park was impressive. Everything looks like new including the equipment and rubberized ground cover. Mowed and ready for a picnic.



- A really nice park, swimming pool, and baseball fields on the west and south parts of town.



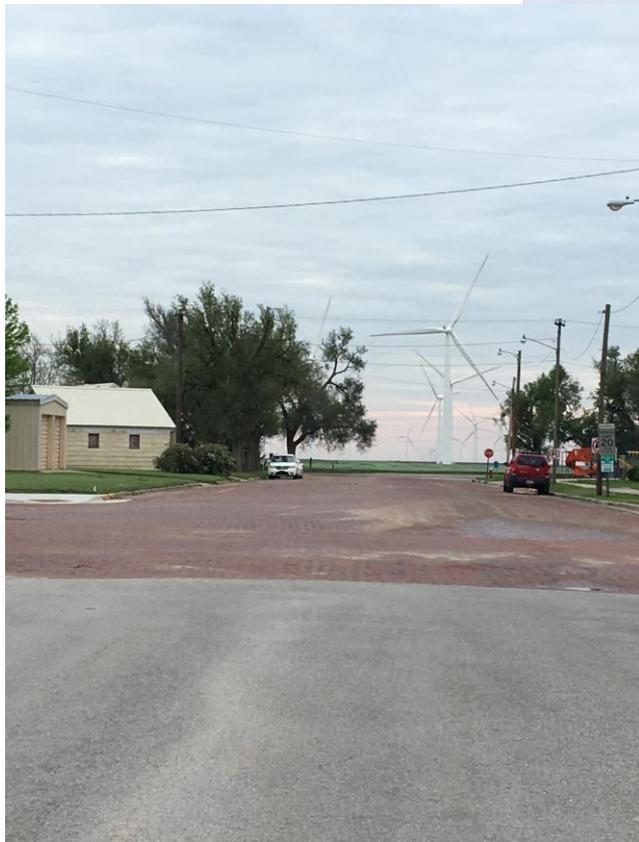


## Well-Known for an attraction or event?

- Spearville has a City of Windmills (COW) Festival in July. Lots of activities all day.
- *As of July 12, the festival was not evident on City site.*
- Visitor saw signs for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event on June 24<sup>th</sup>.

## Natural or manmade features that can draw people?

- The windmills



## Visitor's Center

- City Hall building is properly marked and on main street.



## What would bring you back?

- Nothing was notable to the visitors.

# Most Positive Observations

- All the streets appeared clean and neat. Construction on bank and bandshell shows a positive outlook for the future.
- The town is really beautiful. Very quaint. People are friendly and the shops are cute.
- Clean housing and community. The Feist Foundation investment in ballparks. Spearville is doing great things.

# Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- Possibly the lack of a nursing home.
- The loss of the grocery store and small retail activity.
- Too close to Dodge City with a large percentage working there.

## What will you remember?

- Friendliness of the population.
- The view of the windmills.
- The restaurant was a real treat, with a friendly cook and delicious food.
- Clean and neat!

***Thanks to our leadership team and volunteers!***

## **Set Next Steps:**

- Which group will lead the discussion?

Your local Extension Staff:

**Andrea Burns**

**[aburns@ksu.edu](mailto:aburns@ksu.edu)**

**Ethel Schneweis**

**[eschnewe@ksu.edu](mailto:eschnewe@ksu.edu)**

**620-227-4542**

## K-State Research and Extension

**PRIDE:** <http://kansasprideprogram.k-state.edu/>

- Local communities identify what they would like to preserve, create, or improve for their future and volunteers pull together to create their ideal community future.



K-State home » K-State Research and Extension » Kansas PRIDE Program

### Kansas PRIDE Program



- Home
- About Us
- Enrollment and Reporting
- Promotion
- Education



## K-State Research and Extension

### Contact

**Nancy Daniels**

[nkdaniels@ksu.edu](mailto:nkdaniels@ksu.edu)

to participate.

### Grant Writing Workshops

**Grants are a vital piece in your community's funding puzzle...and *you* can do it.**

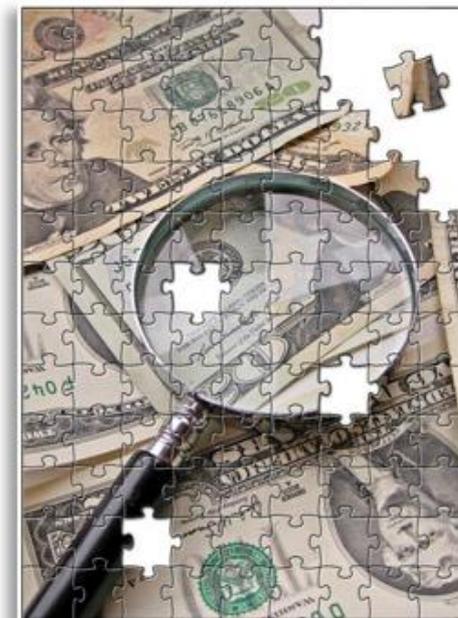
K-State Research and Extension's Community Vitality Team offers grant writing workshops for local communities.

#### Objectives

- Conquer your grant writing fears and start writing.
- Learn new sources of data to document community needs.
- Learn new sources of grant funding.
- Practice developing the Grant Elements: Problem, Outcomes, Activities, Evaluation, and Budget.

#### Short Term Outcomes

- 93% have increased confidence to write a successful grant.
- 94% learned new sources of data to document community needs.
- 80% learned new sources for finding grants.
- 91% have increased confidence to develop the elements of a successful grant.



## K-State Research and Extension

- **First Friday e-Calls 9:30-10:30 am (CT)**
  - Connecting small businesses and communities with the resources to make them successful.
  - Contact Nancy Daniels [nkdaniels@ksu.edu](mailto:nkdaniels@ksu.edu) to participate.
  - Previous calls are recorded at <http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/business/entrepreneurship/>
  - Community Vitality Calendar of events: <http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/>

- <http://smallbizsurvival.com/>  
– THE SMALL TOWN AND RURAL BUSINESS RESOURCE

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Small Biz Survival website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: NEW! SURVEY, BOOK BECKY TO SPEAK, THE BOOK: SMALL TOWN RULES, SHOP LOCAL EBOOK, and SAVEYOUR.TOWN. Below this is a large banner for 'SMALL BIZ SURVIVAL' with the subtitle 'THE SMALL TOWN AND RURAL BUSINESS RESOURCE'. To the right of the banner is a photo of a town street with a blue callout box that says 'cooperating with saveyour.town'. Below the banner is a secondary navigation bar with links: FRONT PAGE, LATEST STORIES, ABOUT, GUIDED TOUR, SUBSCRIBE, PODCAST, CONTACT, and RSS. The main content area features a section titled 'WHAT BUSINESS STAGE ARE YOU IN?' with two articles: 'Dreaming' (with a 'Pizza' sign image) and 'Doing & Growing' (with a brick wall image). On the right side, there is a sign-up form for newsletters, including a text input field for an email address, a 'JOIN' button, and a checkbox for 'Small Biz Survival'. A red arrow points to the email address input field.

NEW! SURVEY    BOOK BECKY TO SPEAK    THE BOOK: SMALL TOWN RULES    SHOP LOCAL EBOOK    SAVEYOUR.TOWN

## SMALL BIZ SURVIVAL

THE SMALL TOWN AND RURAL BUSINESS RESOURCE

cooperating with  
saveyour.town

FRONT PAGE    LATEST STORIES    ABOUT    GUIDED TOUR    SUBSCRIBE    PODCAST    CONTACT    RSS

WHAT BUSINESS STAGE ARE YOU IN?

### Dreaming

For those who are dreaming or planning to start a business of their own. ... [Get started.](#)

### Doing & Growing

For those who have a business and have grown to the point that it's

Get our articles plus special bonus emails, a positive view of rural once a week:  
Join me and 3546 rural friends.  
email address

Newsletters

- Small Biz Survival
- Positive View of Rural
- Building Possibility

JOIN

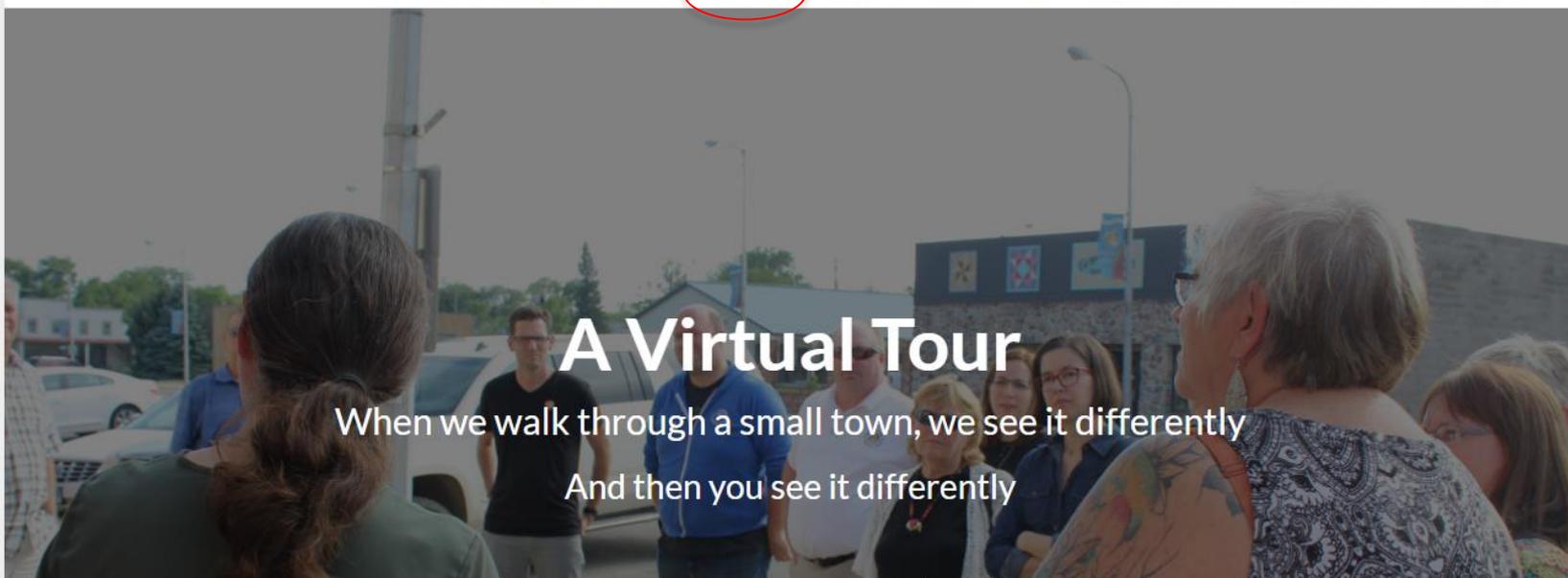
I will never sell or rent your email

## Resources I like:

- <http://saveyour.town/>
  - Monthly live webinars; available on recording.
  - Pay once and show as many times as you want.
  - Watch parties encouraged.

**SAVEYOUR**.town

[HOME](#) [ABOUT DEB & BECKY](#) [WEBINARS](#) [TOOLKITS](#) [WORK WITH US](#) [I DON'T HAVE TIME!](#) [CONTACT](#) [MEMBERS LOGIN](#)



- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/brownbagmx/>  
Brown Bag Marketing Exchange  
(Atchison, KS Co-Marketing group)

The screenshot shows the Facebook interface for the "Brown Bag Marketing Exchange" group. The top navigation bar includes the Facebook logo, a search bar with "Brown Bag Marketing Exchange" entered, and user profile information for "Nancy" with "Home 17" and notification icons. The group cover image features a row of brown paper bags with the text "BROWN BAG marketing exchange" overlaid in white. Below the cover, it identifies the group as a "Linked Group · Webcom Resources" and provides options for "Joined", "Notifications", "Share", and a menu icon. The main content area has a "Write Post" section with options for "Add Photo/Video", "Live Video", and "More". Below this is a "Write something..." input field with a profile picture of two people. To the right, a "LINKED GROUP BY" section lists "Webcom Resources Marketing Agency" with "121 like this". At the bottom, there is a "Recommended by the Admins" section with a "See Less" link. On the left sidebar, the group name "Brown Bag Marketing Exchange" is listed as a "Public Group", with navigation options for "Discussion", "Members", "Events", "Videos", and "Photos". A "Search this group" bar is also present. At the very bottom left, there is a "Knowledge forLife" logo.

## Kansas Healthy Food Initiative

- **Goal:** Increase access to affordable fresh food and to improve the health and economic development of Kansans and their communities.
- Technical assistance and financing to develop new or renovate fresh food retail in underserved communities throughout Kansas.

<http://kansashealthyfood.org/>

**Isabelle Busenitz, [ibusenitz@ksu.edu](mailto:ibusenitz@ksu.edu),**

KHFI Technical Assistance Coordinator, 785-532-6868



## Nancy Daniels

Community Vitality Specialist,  
K-State Research and Extension

785.410.6352

[nkdaniels@ksu.edu](mailto:nkdaniels@ksu.edu)