

Situation

Kansans are increasingly concerned about community vitality and sustained economic growth. Ongoing concerns in nearly every Kansas community include a lack of employment opportunities, declining per capita income and the retention of youth and young adults in communities. While some communities are growing, many are losing population and economic capacity. Entrepreneurship can help grow the Kansas economy.

More than 80 percent of total job creation comes from Kansas companies who start up or grow here.[i] Entrepreneurship and entrepreneur mindset have a significant impact on the Kansas economy because new businesses account for nearly all net job creation and almost 20 percent of gross job creation.[ii] Young firms exhibit an “up or out” dynamic, in which innovative and successful firms grow rapidly and become a wellspring of job and economic growth, or quickly fail and exit the market, allowing capital to be put to more productive uses.[iii] However, new businesses represent a declining share of the business community. According to census data, new firms represented as much as 16 percent of all firms in the late 1970’s. By 2011, that share had declined to 8 percent. This declining rate of startups threatens growth in jobs and economic activity.[iv] K-State Research and Extension has an important role to play in stimulating entrepreneurial activity in Kansas communities.

Kansas has excellent resources for helping small businesses and entrepreneurs flourish. K-State Research and Extension agents and specialists are a reliable source of research-based information to connect entrepreneurs with the education, experts and economic resources they need.

Beyond the value of creating more businesses and a more vital economy, entrepreneurship education provides additional benefits. A 2013 national survey of business and nonprofit leaders conducted by the Association of American Colleges & Universities found that employers seek students with entrepreneurial traits. These entrepreneurial traits include innovation and a demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems.[v]

[i] National Establishment Time-Series (NETS) database (Walls & Associates) provided under contract by the Business Dynamics Research Consortium: a project of the University of Wisconsin- Extension Division for Business and Entrepreneurship. Mazerov, M and Leachman, M (2016) “State Job Creation Strategies Often Off Base.” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

[ii] Haltiwanger, J., Jarmin, R.S., and Miranda, J., “Who Creates Jobs? Small Versus Large Versus Young,” The Review of Economics and Statistics (Vol. XCV May 2013 Number 2).

[iii] ibid

[iv] Entrepreneurship Policy Digest, Kaufman Foundation, September 25, 2014, updated September 14, 2015.

[v] Association of American Colleges & Universities. (2013). It Takes More than a Major Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success: Overview and Key Findings. Retrieved from internet 7.25.16 <http://www.aacu.org/leap/presidentstrust/compact/2013SurveySummary>.

Public Value

K-State Research and Extension Community Development programming increases the knowledge of local youth to become entrepreneurial, creates a shared community vision of the value of entrepreneurial thinking and increases the local entrepreneur’s access to education, experts and the economic resources to help them. Established businesses are counseled to establish succession planning so that valued businesses stay in the community.

Outputs

- PFT promotes; agents present e2 Entrepreneurship Experience “SPIN Club” curriculum to youth.
- PFT holds monthly e-call to educate local agents about the resources available for entrepreneurs.

- PFT promotes; agents present curriculum to educate potential small business owners how to start a small business or a small food business.
- Agents promote utilization of Entrepreneurship curriculum (MF3283, MF3284) for local audiences so that people see opportunities for themselves and their children in local communities.
- Agents initiate or promote mindset training at the community level:
 - “Who Owns the Ice House” training
 - “Youth Entrepreneurs” for high school youth
 - SPIN Clubs and “Junior Shark Tanks” for elementary youth
- Agents celebrate local entrepreneurs in Newsletter articles, blogs, social media.
- Agents create opportunities for business leaders to mentor youth.
- SPIN Clubs, 4-H Clubs,
- Entrepreneurship Camps
- Agents promote SBDC Business planning.
- Agents create or promote opportunities for business leaders to network with each other.
- Networking suppers or am coffees for small business owners, entrepreneurs.
- Agents develop and/or nurture “financial capital” opportunities that support local entrepreneurs.
- Develop E-Communities and/or serve on their leadership teams.
- Know about and promote SBIR/STTR loans.
- Agents create or promote programs that support existing businesses to grow.
- Economic Gardening.
- Support and promote locally driven business succession planning efforts.
- SBDC.

Short-Term (Knowledge)

- Participants gain understanding that entrepreneurship is a viable option for creating a living in their own community.
- Youth increase skills in leadership and innovation.
- Youth increase feelings of self-efficacy.
- Youth increase knowledge of and connections to successful business leaders in the community.
- Youth envision a role for themselves in the community
- Agents are knowledgeable about the entrepreneurial resources available for their local communities and businesses.
- Agents have resources to help coach new business development.
- Entrepreneurs are valued and supported by the community.
- The community has many opportunities for creative networking.

Indicators

- # of youth served by SPIN Club curriculum.
- # of participants on monthly e-call.
- # of resources shared on e-call.
- # of participants at presentations of Entrepreneurship Curriculum.
- # of new businesses started after attending KSRE-sponsored entrepreneur events.
- # of potential new business owners who create business plans after attending KSRE-sponsored entrepreneur events.
- # of ways/times agents celebrate entrepreneurs.
- # of business leaders participating in mentoring opportunities with youth.
- # of participants/minority participants who report being “more likely” to start a business after attending the Starting a Small Business workshop.
- # of networking groups originated by KSRE agents or meet in KSRE offices.
- # of new E-Communities created with KSRE agent leadership.
- # of E-Communities with KSRE Agents on their leadership teams.
- # of SBIR/STTR clients referred.
- # of participants/minority participants at economic gardening workshops originated or promoted by KSRE agents.
- # of business clients referred to small business succession planning.

Medium-Term (Behavior)

- Communities are involved in many entrepreneurial activities and there is a culture that celebrates entrepreneurship.
- Communities are densely connected with opportunities for horizontal and vertical networking.
- Communities have a strong sense of self-efficacy and the resources to be successful.

Indicators

- # of new e-communities
- # of businesses that successfully transition between owners.
- # of new businesses forming.
- # of business people involved in mentoring.

Long-Term (Change in Condition)

- Strong, vibrant, sustainable communities

Indicators

- # of communities with stable population