



# LOCAL FOOD TOWN HALL

**January 24, 2024**

**11am - 12pm**

**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

Local Food Systems

# Welcome Poll:

- Have you attended a quarterly Local Food Town Hall in the past?
  - Yes, more than one time
  - Yes, one other time
  - No, this is my first
  - I'm not sure

# Today's Agenda:

- Lightning Presentations:
  - Britni Beck - Executive Director of CERNA: Center of Excellence for Regenerative Native Agriculture with the Iowa Tribe of Kansas & Nebraska
  - Jessica Gnad - Director of K-State 105
  - Brittney Grother - Grants Coordinator, Kansas Department of Agriculture
  - Erica Blair - Program Manager, Kansas Healthy Food Initiative
- RFSP Grant Project Updates – Rebecca McMahon
  - Community Roundtables
  - Fellows Program
- Discussion & Announcements of Local Food Systems efforts in Kansas
- Evaluation



Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska's  
**Center of Excellence for Regenerative  
Native Agriculture (CERNA)**

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*A USDA Partnerships for Climate Smart  
Commodities Program*

# CERNA

## Program Overview

### Key Objectives:

- Support the production and marketing of climate-smart commodities
- Provide voluntary incentives to producers and landowners, including early adopters
- Implement climate-smart agricultural production practices, activities, and systems on working lands.
- Measure/quantify, monitor, and verify the carbon and greenhouse gas (GHG) benefits associated with those practices.
- Develop markets for and promote the resulting climate-smart commodities.

### Importance and Benefits:

- CERNA will create lasting and long-term impact for Tribal nations through the promotion and practice of regenerative and Native land stewardship, education, and technical assistance provided to project participants.



# Project Objectives



CERNA climate-smart commodities may include, but are not limited to: sunflowers, soybean, corn, wheat, barley, sorghum, oats, and a diverse range of cover crops.



Incentivized and promoted climate-smart practices include cover crops, crop rotations, reduction of synthetic fertilizers, mulching, conservation burning, reduced tillage, no till, nutrient management implementation, and livestock integration.



CERNA's partner, Miraterra, will measure, quantify, and monitor the impact of climate-smart practices on carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas reduction. Partner, Regenified, will help to create market channels for certified commodities.



# CERNA Mission Statement

Our mission is to empower farmers and Tribal nations, together, as stewards of the land, and to implement regenerative Native agricultural practices across all of Indian Country. Through education, training, and technical assistance, we provide participants with access to new markets, certification, and traceability programs with a diverse range of partners and peer-to-peer networking opportunities.

Join us in sowing the seeds of a sustainable tomorrow, where the roots of tradition meet the boundless potential of Mother Earth.

# Contact Information

For further inquiries, please reach out to:

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Director of Ops

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CERNA Executive Director

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To learn more and complete the Enrollment Interest Form, scan the code below!



[www.IowaTribeofKansasandNebraska.com](http://www.IowaTribeofKansasandNebraska.com)



# K-State 105

- ***Answers the call*** for economic growth.
- ***Leverages the statewide K-State Research and Extension network*** to deliver Kansas State University.
- ***Forges the connections and partnerships*** that create access to additional expertise within other state institutions and agencies, nonprofits and corporations.

# A statewide small business initiative

In the last **25 years**, **66%** of all new U.S. job creation has come from small business.

We believe all Kansas communities — **urban and rural** — can experience economic growth through locally-driven entrepreneurial small business growth strategies.

With its presence in all 105 counties, K-State is uniquely positioned to create a **statewide small business initiative**.



# K-State 105

## Job creation

Aligned with K-State's economic prosperity plan, K-State 105 is poised to create direct jobs within the state of Kansas.

## Capital and equity investment

K-State 105 will assist in attracting and leveraging private and public capital and equity investment for Kansas.

## Business development

By creating connections and leveraging our networks and expertise, K-State 105 will help in the establishment or expansion of new businesses.

## Funding and technical assistance

K-State 105 will assist in securing funding or substantive technical assistance for businesses, entrepreneurs, communities and municipalities.

# K-State 105: Catalyzing Change



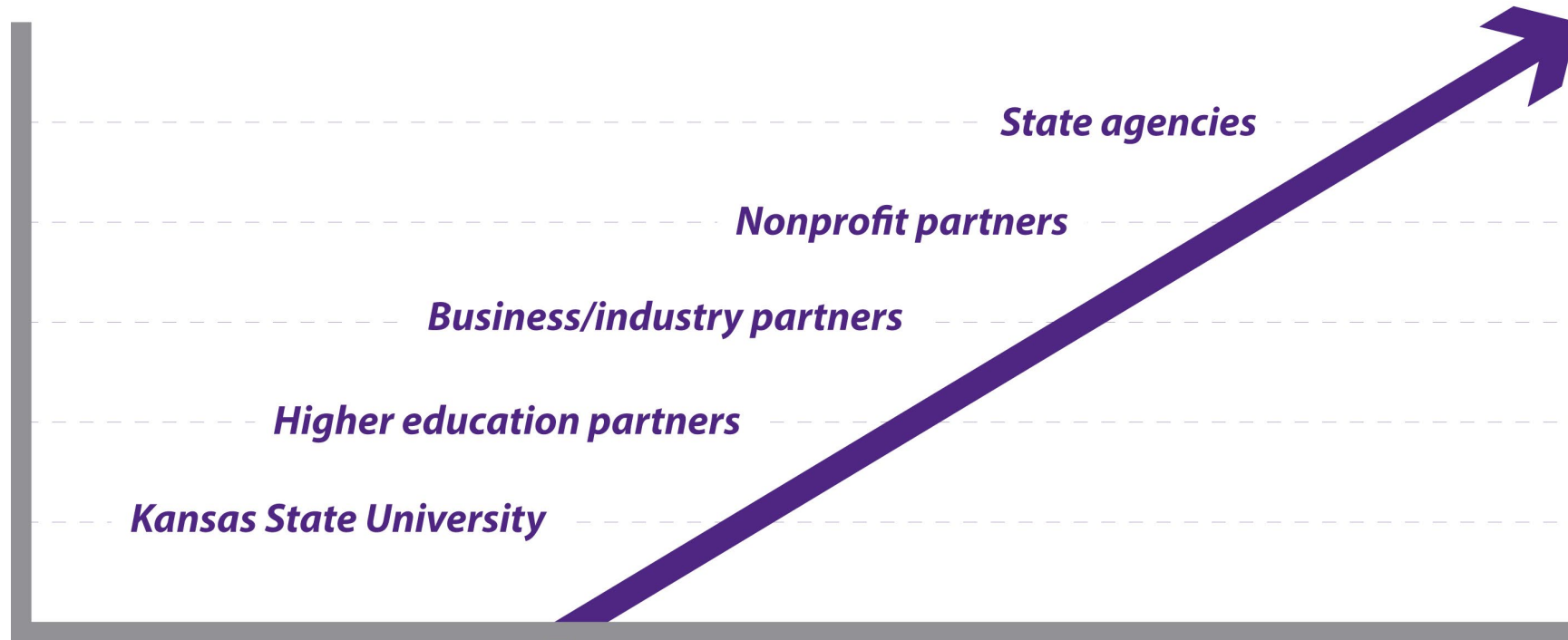
Leverage the **K-State Research and Extension network**, to deliver the full breadth of Kansas State University into every corner of Kansas.

**Partner with other state universities, community colleges, and tech schools** to deliver solutions through our established K-State Research and Extension infrastructure.

**Build additional capacities and strengths** within the state by forging partnerships with non-profits, state agencies, industry, and others.

# K-State 105: Collective Impact for Kansas

*We will draw upon K-State's strengths, intentionally layering in the targeted expertise held within our state to foster the best lives possible for Kansans.*



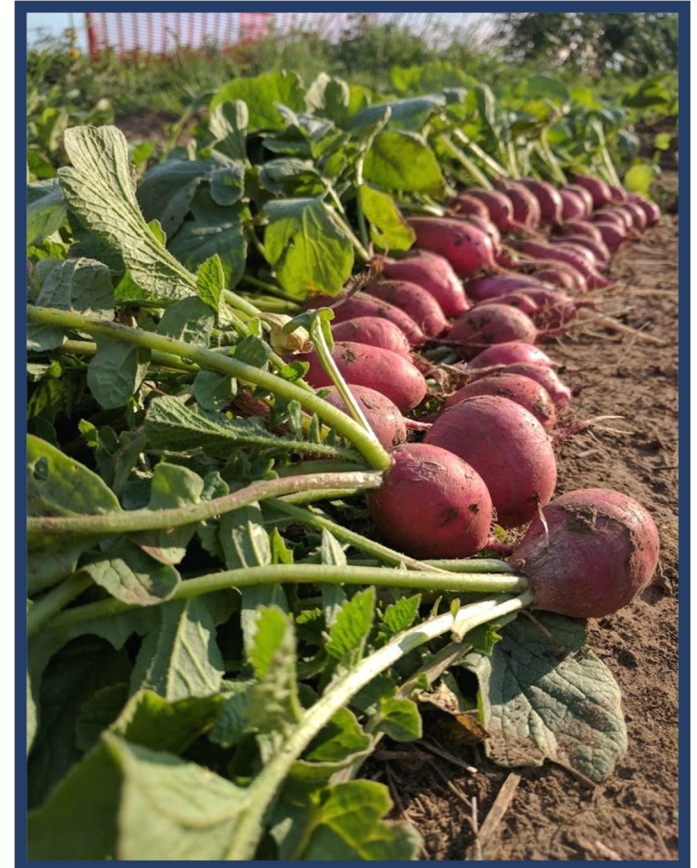
# SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

- **To enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops in Kansas by:**
  - (1) leveraging efforts to market and promote specialty crops;**
  - (2) assisting producers with research and development relevant to specialty crops;**
  - (3) expanding availability and access to specialty crops; and**
  - (4) addressing local, regional, and national challenges confronting specialty crop producers.**



# DEFINITION

- **Specialty crops are defined by the USDA as:**
  - **Fruits**
  - **Vegetables**
  - **Tree nuts**
  - **Dried fruits**
  - **Horticulture**
  - **Nursery crops (including floriculture)**
- **Plants must be cultivated or managed and used by people for food, medicinal purposes, or aesthetic gratification to be considered specialty crops**



# FUNDING PRIORITIES

- **The Kansas specialty crop industry has put importance on the following priorities:**
  - **Improving efficiency and reducing costs of distribution systems**
  - **Sustainability**
  - **Increasing nutrition knowledge and consumption of specialty crops**
- **Preference will be given to projects that are one year in duration.**
- **USDA encourages projects that benefit smaller farms and ranches, new and beginning farmers and ranchers, underserved producers, veteran producers, and/or underserved communities.**



# GRANT PROJECT GUIDELINES

- **A project is a set of interrelated tasks with a cohesive, distinct, specified, and defined goal.**
- **Projects are different from other operations in an organization because projects have a limited duration.**
- **Projects use resources that are specifically allocated to the work of the project and usually involve a team of people.**



# APPLICATION PROCESS

- **Consists of a project profile, letters of support, and an online application.**
- **The Request for Applications document should be published by February.**
- **Applications are typically due in March.**
- **Applications go through a competitive review process before being approved by the USDA.**



# Kansas Healthy Food Initiative

*Mission: Increase access to affordable, healthy food to improve the health and economic development of Kansans and their communities.*



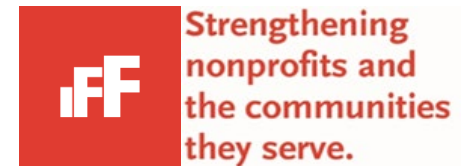
*Partners:*



KANSAS HEALTH  
FOUNDATION

**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

Rural Grocery  
Initiative



# Available Financing

KHFI supports one-time investments that sustain or enhance the availability of healthy food at the retail level across Kansas

## Examples of how KHFI funds may be used

- Building renovation, expansion, or construction of grocery stores, farm stands, processing/packing sheds, and other healthy food retail outlets
- Purchase or upgrade of equipment, including coolers, point of sale systems, farm machinery, vehicles, etc.
- Initial one-time startup costs, including inventory, shelving, etc.

## Loan/grant mixes are available for eligible projects

- Loan/grant funding packages:  
Comprised of 15% grant funding, with grant caps dependent on total request.
- Expanded parameters for BIPOC-led projects:  
Up to 20% of the total KHFI funding package can be a grant.



**KCK FARMERS' MARKET**  
*Kansas City, KS*



**LUCAS HOME OIL**  
*Lucas, KS*



**PEARSONS FARMS**  
*Wichita, KS*



**MEDITERRANEAN MARKET**  
*Lawrence, KS*



**COMMON GROUND**  
*Wichita, KS*



**TECK FARMS**  
*Hutchinson, KS*



**MARMATON MARKET**  
*Moran, KS*



**MILDRED STORE**  
*Mildred, KS*



**BLUESTEM MERCANTILE**  
*Leon, KS*



**WILSON FOODS**  
*Wilson, KS*



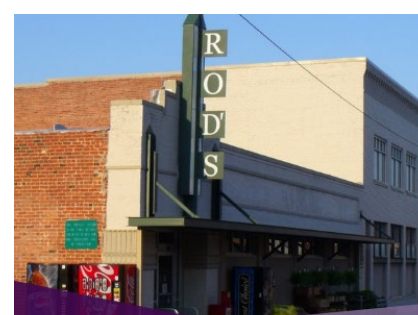
**SUPERMART EL TORITO**  
*Topeka, KS*



**PIPER'S FINE FOODS**  
*Marquette, KS*



**ROMMEY FARMS**  
*Cassoday, KS*



**ROD'S MARKET**  
*Concordia, KS*



**GRAND AVENUE MARKET**  
*Plains, KS*

# THE PROCESS

Submit your intake form at [kansashealthyfood.org/](https://kansashealthyfood.org/).

## STEP 1: ELIGIBILITY REVIEW *[2 weeks]*

To find out if your project is a good candidate for the Kansas Healthy Food Initiative, visit [kansashealthyfood.org](https://kansashealthyfood.org/) and click on the Program Details tab. KHFI staff will contact you to discuss the eligibility of your project. An eligibility determination will be shared with you within two weeks. Eligible projects are:

- Committed to healthy foods
- Carried out in low-resource areas
- Carried out in underserved areas
- Led by experienced operators
- Integrated with community needs

**Eligibility does not guarantee funding.**

**If eligible,**

## STEP 2: FINANCING *[at least 90 days]*

Compile and submit your KHFI financial application:

- NetWork Kansas will connect the applicant to a local resource partner, such as a regional Certified Development Company (CDC).
- The resource partner will provide the applicant with the KHFI financial application and submit it to KHFI on behalf of the applicant.

Financial Review:

- After underwriting, the financial package offer will be developed.
- The amount of time required to disperse funds depends on completeness of application, submission of all funding documents, and readiness of project.
- Funding decisions are made by the KHFI Investment Committee.

Eligibility Review

*[2 weeks]*

Funding Process

*[at least 90 days]*

## Bluestem Mercantile

Leon, Kansas



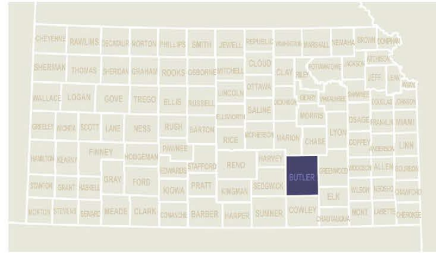
The storefront of Bluestem Mercantile in downtown Leon, KS.

## Background

The City of Leon is located in the south-central region of Kansas in Butler County and sits about 30 miles east of Wichita. The Unified School District (USD) 205, also known as Bluestem School District, is based in Leon and runs Bluestem Elementary School (pre-K through 6th grade) and Bluestem High School (7th through 12th grade). The school district spans much of southeast Butler County. While the city only has a population of about 600 people, the Bluestem School District serves nearly 350 square miles of the surrounding area serving about 500 students and 300 families. The school district provides local jobs, countless community events throughout the year and is an important player in the community of Leon.



Coolers at the Bluestem Mercantile.



## About the Community

CITY POPULATION*	614
COUNTY POPULATION**†	66,698
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME*	\$57,125
MEDIAN AGE*	38 years
CHILDREN LIVING BELOW POVERTY LEVEL **†	13.0%
FAMILIES LIVING BELOW POVERTY LEVEL **†	6.8%
LOW INCOME & LOW ACCESS TO GROCERY STORE***	6.8%
PEOPLE WITH LOW ACCESS TO A GROCERY STORE***	26.4%
CHILDREN WITH LOW ACCESS TO A GROCERY STORE ***†	6.9%

\*ACS 2019, \*\*Kansas Health Matters, †County Level Data

# Bluestem Mercantile

- **Location:** Leon, KS
- **Location type:** Rural
- **Background:** The Bluestem School District sought a main street business for the entrepreneurship class to operate. The Bluestem School Board approved funding to purchase a building in downtown Leon with the expectation that the venture would cover its costs once up and running.
- **KHFI funding:** Loan-grant mix
- **Funding use:** Roof repairs, coolers, point of sale system, and initial store inventory

# KHFI Metrics

(October 2017 – September 2023)

Impact Area	Cumulative Totals
<b>OVERALL REACH</b>	132 applications received
	66 projects funded
	\$4,525,195 funded
	168,071 sq. ft. of food retail spaced expanded or renovated
	1,168 technical assistance inquiries supported
<b>GEOGRAPHIC REACH</b>	63 counties reached (39 counties approved)
<b>JOBS</b>	425.5 jobs retained / supported
	200 jobs created
<b>LEVERAGE</b>	\$14.76 M in committed funding from other sources
<b>RESIDENTS SERVED</b>	268,452 residents served (75,024 are BIPOC = 27.9% of all residents)



# Local Food Fellows

- Working on hiring our 5 K-State student summer fellows now
  - Still accepting applications for:
    - K-State Research and Extension - Chisholm Trail District
    - Live Well Geary County
- Final 6 Independent Fellow position descriptions will be posted soon on our website
  - Accepting apps through March 1

# Community Roundtables Update

- Completed 12 in person and 4 virtual roundtables with 342 people in attendance total!
- Still pending:
  - Kansas Black Farmers Association & Prairie Band Potawatomi Food Network roundtables
  - Liberal, KS Roundtable – tentatively planned for March 7th, details TBA
- Tentatively planning to share results at the April Town Hall.

# Local Food Producer Workshop

- Olathe – Feb. 9th
  - Online streaming; Spanish interpretation
- Hutchinson – Feb. 10th
- Parsons – Feb. 23rd
- Hays – March 1st
- \$20 / \$25 late registration



# Discussion and Updates

# Next Town Hall: Wednesday, April 24<sup>th</sup> at 11 a.m.



Register at: <https://bit.ly/2024localfoodtownhalls>

Notes & Recordings of all Town Halls can be found at:

<https://www.k-state.edu/kansaslocalfoods>

# Closing Poll:

- Did you learn something new today?
  - Yes
  - No
- Which topics were valuable to you today?
  - Britni Beck - Executive Director of CERNA: Center for Excellence of Regenerative Native Agriculture with the Iowa Tribe of Kansas & Nebraska
  - Jessica Gnad - Director of K-State 105
  - Brittney Grother - Grants Coordinator, Kansas Department of Agriculture
  - Erica Blair - Program Manager, Kansas Healthy Food Initiative
  - RFSP Grant Updates
  - Discussion and Other Updates/Announcements

# Closing Poll:

- Did you learn about new funding opportunities today?
  - Yes, and I hope to pursue one or more of them myself
  - Yes, and I plan to share that information with others it might benefit
  - I'm not sure.
  - No, nothing new, but I plan to share the information with others
  - No, I didn't learn anything new and I don't plan to share the information.

# Closing Poll:

- How many people will you share something with from today's town hall?
  - None
  - 1
  - 2-5
  - 6 or more
- Do you have suggestions for speakers or topics at our next Town Hall?
  - Please submit suggestions in the chat