



# October 2025 Local Food Town Hall

# Today's Agenda:

- Presentations:
  - Harvest Hays – Matt Bender, The Arc of Central Plains
  - Connecting Johnson County Farmers Markets – Renee Bryant, Johnson County Health Dept.
- Program Updates from Across the State
  - Funding, grant programs, and staffing changes
  - Upcoming events
  - New resources or opportunities
- 2026 Town Halls
- Evaluation

Notes & Recordings of all Town Halls can be found at: <https://www.k-state.edu/kansaslocalfoods>



# 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

# Welcome Poll:

- What part of the state are you from?
  - Northeast
  - North Central
  - Northwest
  - Southwest
  - South Central
  - Southeast
  - KC Metro, MO
  - Not from Kansas
- Please put your name, location, and organization or business affiliation (if any) in the chat.

# GET INVOLVED JOIN US

[Learn More](#)[Sign Up for Our Mailing List](#)

## JOIN US

Local food systems are successful when they have many diverse partners working together for a common goal. We invite you to join in our virtual or in-person events to help us continue building a thriving Kansas Local Food System.

Quarterly Virtual Town Halls

Community Roundtables

Local Food Fellows

Local Food Summit



# The Arc of Central Plains

Matt Bender



# A Small but Growing Local Farm





# Growing People as Much as Produce





# From Farm to Table





# Expanding Opportunity





# Growing Food, People, and Community





# Thank You





# Kansas Local Food Town Hall - October 29, 2025

## Connecting our County's Farmers Market An Action Plan for Johnson County, Kansas

USDA - FARMERS MARKET AND LOCAL FOOD PROMOTION PROGRAM (LFPP)



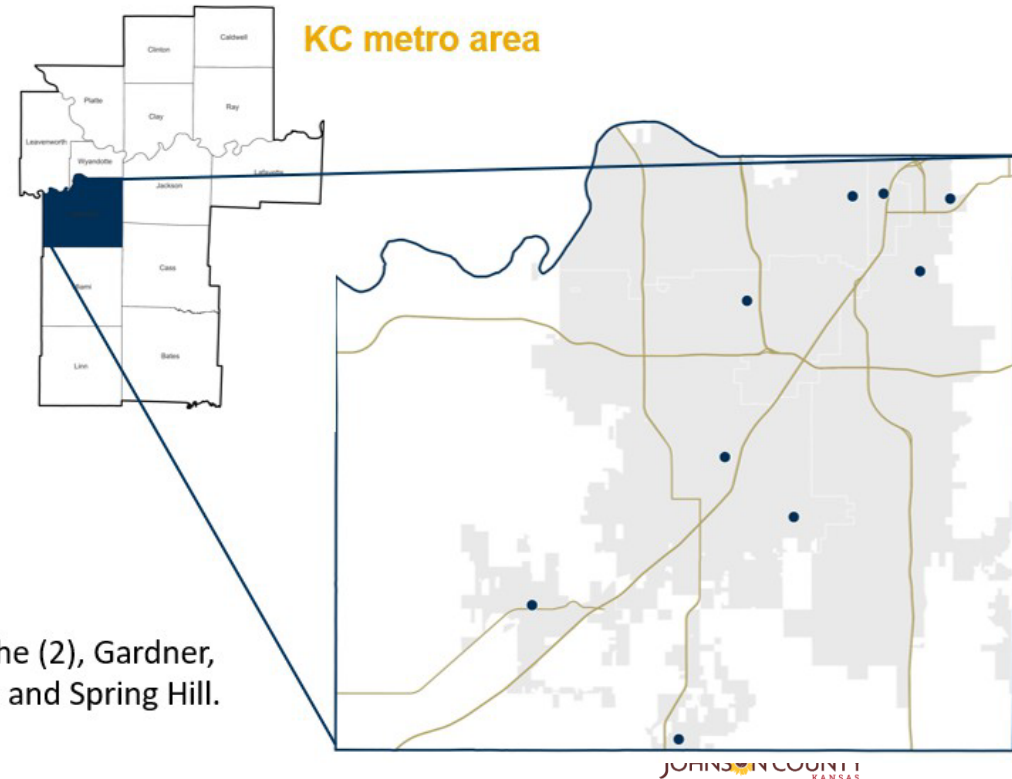
**Renee Bryant, M.Ed.**  
Food Policy and Advocacy Program Manager  
Department of Health and Environment  
11875 S. Sunset Drive, Suite 300, Olathe, KS 66061  
Direct (913) 477-8325

Population (August 2025)

**632,276**

9 Farmers Markets

Lenexa, Overland Park, Olathe (2), Gardner,  
Merriam, Mission, Shawnee and Spring Hill.



## “Connecting Our County’s Farmers Markets: An Action Plan for Johnson County, Kansas”



A three-year project that will help to build a resilient network of farmers markets within Johnson County and provide a replicable model for statewide enhancement of farmers markets.



Objective 1: Convene a County Farmers **Market Steering Committee** to guide the project. **COMPLETED**



Objective 2: Collect **key data points** to inform the entire farmers market sector of Johnson County.



Community-based research projects that will include the following research pieces:

- (a) an assessment of vendor and customer needs through a Rapid Market Assessment (RMA); **COMPLETED**
- (b) an assessment of how the **retail environment** of farmers market support vendors’ and customers’ needs. **COMPLETED**
- (c) a **policy environment assessment** to identify regulatory barriers and opportunities; **COMPLETED**
- (d) a **capacity assessment** of the 9 farmers markets’ structure and policies. **COMPLETED**



"This work is supported by the USDA-XM4-FARMERS MARKET PROMOTION PROGRAM project award no. 23FMPPKS1193 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture."

"Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and should not be construed to represent any official USDA or U.S. Government determination or policy."





## Rapid Market Assessments

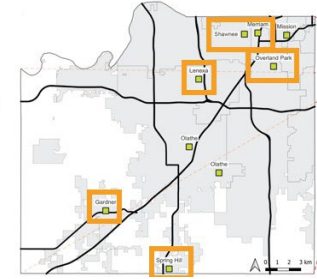
8 markets assessed

744 customers participated

AdCo Partner's Market Environmental Audit Tool  
(Adapted from FISH neighborhood audit instrument - Peterson et al. 2003, 2005)

| AdCo Partner's Market Environmental Audit Tool               |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Name  | Neighborhood  |
| 2. Market ID#  |   |
| 3. Date  |   |
| 4. Time of Day   |   |
| Walk through the entire market with the following checklist: |   |
| 1. Walkway conditions  | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe<br><input type="checkbox"/> Clean<br><input type="checkbox"/> Well-maintained<br><input type="checkbox"/> No potholes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No debris<br><input type="checkbox"/> No graffiti<br><input type="checkbox"/> No litter<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal parking<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal vending<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal signage<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal advertising<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal parking<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal vending<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal signage<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal advertising |
| 2. Sidewalk conditions                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe<br><input type="checkbox"/> Clean<br><input type="checkbox"/> Well-maintained<br><input type="checkbox"/> No potholes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No debris<br><input type="checkbox"/> No graffiti<br><input type="checkbox"/> No litter<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal parking<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal vending<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal signage<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal advertising   |
| 3. Street conditions   | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe<br><input type="checkbox"/> Clean<br><input type="checkbox"/> Well-maintained<br><input type="checkbox"/> No potholes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No debris<br><input type="checkbox"/> No graffiti<br><input type="checkbox"/> No litter<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal parking<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal vending<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal signage<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal advertising   |
| 4. Parking conditions  | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe<br><input type="checkbox"/> Clean<br><input type="checkbox"/> Well-maintained<br><input type="checkbox"/> No potholes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No debris<br><input type="checkbox"/> No graffiti<br><input type="checkbox"/> No litter<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal parking<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal vending<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal signage<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal advertising   |
| 5. Vending conditions  | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe<br><input type="checkbox"/> Clean<br><input type="checkbox"/> Well-maintained<br><input type="checkbox"/> No potholes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No debris<br><input type="checkbox"/> No graffiti<br><input type="checkbox"/> No litter<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal parking<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal vending<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal signage<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal advertising   |
| 6. Signage conditions  | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe<br><input type="checkbox"/> Clean<br><input type="checkbox"/> Well-maintained<br><input type="checkbox"/> No potholes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No debris<br><input type="checkbox"/> No graffiti<br><input type="checkbox"/> No litter<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal parking<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal vending<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal signage<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal advertising   |
| 7. Accessibility   | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe<br><input type="checkbox"/> Clean<br><input type="checkbox"/> Well-maintained<br><input type="checkbox"/> No potholes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No debris<br><input type="checkbox"/> No graffiti<br><input type="checkbox"/> No litter<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal parking<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal vending<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal signage<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal advertising   |
| 8. Other   | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe<br><input type="checkbox"/> Clean<br><input type="checkbox"/> Well-maintained<br><input type="checkbox"/> No potholes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No debris<br><input type="checkbox"/> No graffiti<br><input type="checkbox"/> No litter<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal parking<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal vending<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal signage<br><input type="checkbox"/> No illegal advertising   |

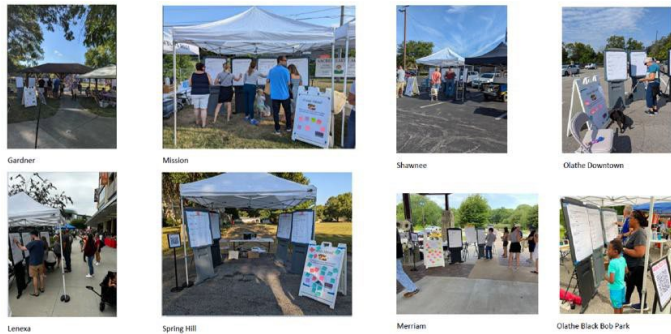
## Environmental Audit Behavioral Mapping



7 markets assessed  
735 min field time  
49 elements assessed  
4,479 individuals observed

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696 customers surveyed  
40+ questions  
59 vendors surveyed  
40+ questions  
5 Managers interviewed  
265 Min transcript

## Social Atmosphere Assessment

### ENTERTAINMENT AREAS

(high importance decision-making factor according to vendors)

#### More defined Entertainment Areas

2 (28.5%) Markets had a playground area were found in defined/concentrated area.



Outdoor adjacent playground



Outdoor adjacent playground



Across the street playground



Music located in designated area around the market (a bit away from vendors)

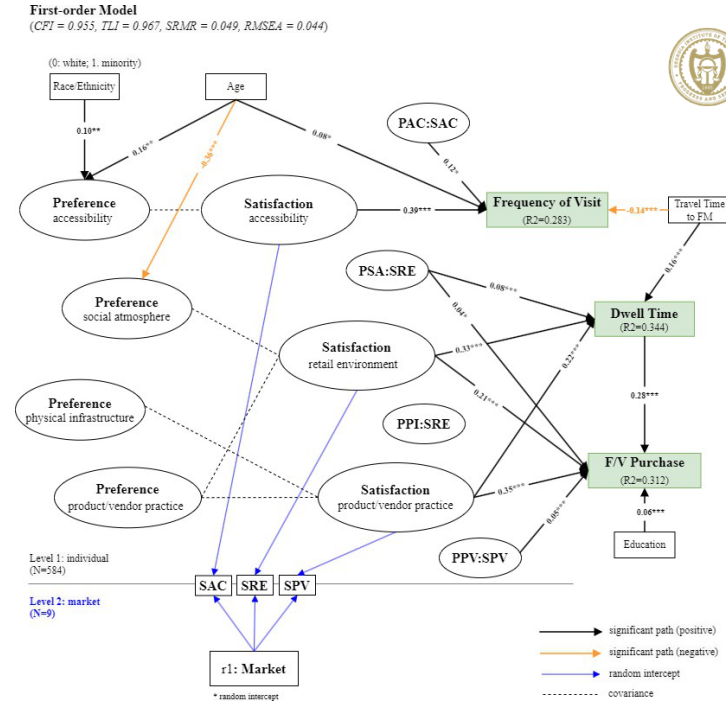
#### Less defined Entertainment Areas



Music in vendor tent



Music in small area



Georgia Institute of Technology

## Does a better retail environment lead to longer stay in FM?

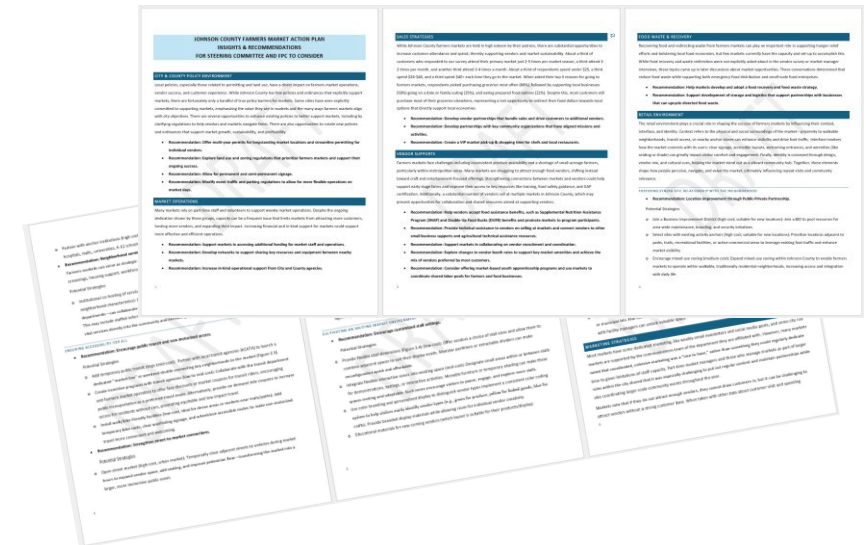
Higher satisfaction with the retail environment and product/vendor lead to **longer dwell time** and higher likelihood of **fruit and vegetable purchasing**.



Objective 3: Utilize research data to create a set of strategic recommendations and a Johnson County Farmers Market Action Plan for market sector enhancement.

Key themes generated during the synthesis stage will be used to create:

- a) market-specific recommendations mini-reports for the individual markets; **COMPLETED**
- b) countywide policy and funding recommendations; **IN PROCESS**
- c) development of marketing strategies for local markets using visual and branding design **2026 Q1 & Q2**
- d) countywide action plan **IN PROCESS**
- e) toolkit **IN DISCUSSION**



Objective 4: Disseminate research process and results to local and statewide agriculture and health leaders to serve as a model for enhancement of the farmers market sector in Johnson County. **IN PROCESS**

VENDOR & COUNTY POLICY ENVIRONMENT - MARKET OPERATIONS - SALES STRATEGIES – VENDOR SUPPORTS  
FOOD WASTE & RECOVERY – RETAIL ENVIRONMENT – MARKETING OPERATIONS

# Questions?



# K-State Local Food Program Updates

# 2026 Town Halls – SAVE THE DATE!

Last Wednesday of the month at 11 a.m.:

- January 28<sup>th</sup>
- April 29<sup>th</sup>
- July 29<sup>th</sup>
- October 28<sup>th</sup>
- Register: <https://bit.ly/3JBnHyt>



Notes & Recordings of all Town Halls can be found at: <https://www.k-state.edu/kansaslocalfoods>



## The Kansas Local Foods Business Team is **here to help.**



What **funding** is available for food businesses in Kansas?



How can farmers **scale up** and get their products into markets?



Where are the **incubator kitchens** across the state?



What resources do you have to support a **food startup**?



What **licensing requirements or regulations** should a business be aware of?

Quinlan Carttar and Jenny Doty

Food Systems Entrepreneurial Resource Navigators

[www.kansaslocalfoods.org](http://www.kansaslocalfoods.org)

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

**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

Local Food  
Systems

# Local Food Producer Workshops

- February and March 2026
- 7 locations across the state:
  - Olathe – Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>
  - Hutchinson – Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>
  - Dodge City – Feb. 26<sup>th</sup>
  - Oakley – Feb. 27<sup>th</sup>
  - Parsons – Mar. 6<sup>th</sup>
  - Beloit – Mar. 10<sup>th</sup>
  - Holton – Mar. 13<sup>th</sup>
- Training on foods that can be sold direct-to-consumer, made in home kitchens, and more!
- Marketing skills for local food farms and businesses
- Production topics

Details and Registration will be available at <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/kansaslocalfoods/get-involved/workshops.html>



# Program Updates from Around the State

# Closing Poll:

- How much do you agree or disagree that the Town Halls have helped you stay connected to statewide local food efforts?
  - Strongly Agree — Agree — Neither — Disagree — Strongly Disagree
- Did you learn something new today?
  - Yes
  - No
- Which topics were valuable to you today?
  - Harvest Hays
  - Johnson County Farmers' Market Research
  - Program Updates

Notes & Recordings of all Town Halls can be found at: <https://www.k-state.edu/kansaslocalfoods>



# 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?

# Thank you!