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Tools for Community Self-determination



KANSAS CITY, KANSAS HEALTHY FOOD SYSTEM ASSESSMENT

Produced For **United Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas**

by

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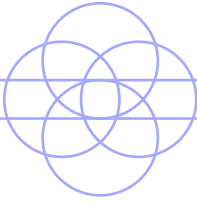
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Good bones” is a phrase residents use to describe the neighborhoods and communities in Kansas City, Kansas. They say the neighborhoods are “well-built,” with deep commitment and pride in their own community. Yet the city is disparate, varying greatly from one side of town to the next, with distinct enclaves of African-Americans, Latinos, and Asian-Americans amidst a majority white population. One of the most diverse in the state, the city hosts residents who speak more than 50 different languages.

Neighborhoods hold unique and individual identities centered upon cultures that persist today. Although this contributes to Kansas City’s¹ rich and diverse identity, it also contributes to a pervasive sense of “us and them,” which challenges broad investment efforts. Poverty and food insecurity are ever-present, with 46% of county residents earning less than a living wage.

Wyandotte County has a relatively rich food retail environment, boasting many culturally identified groceries, stores and food manufacturers of all sizes, five farmers’ markets, a solid cluster of productive urban farms, dozens of community gardens, and orchards that are open for community members to freely harvest.

Further, the county is home to a substantial cluster of food enterprises. Federal data show that there are 435 food-related businesses in the county, hiring more than 12,093 employees, who earned more than \$491 million in 2015. This amounts to about 14% of all firms in the county, 17% of the employees, and 15% of payroll.

Independent Grocers are Strong

Quite unique to Kansas is the city’s concentration of locally and/or independently owned grocery stores. Of the 10 largest national grocery retail chains, only 2 — Wal-Mart and ALDI — have locations in Kansas City, Kansas. Instead, smaller chains, such as those operated by Balls Food (Hen House, Price Chopper, and Sun Fresh), dominate the market.

Yet despite this proud tradition of independent ownership, we heard considerable concern that national chains such as Wal-Mart were taking over and compromising the viability of independent stores. Simultaneously, as in many urban centers, grocers are considering opening smaller-format stores that appeal to urban professionals who wish to walk to stores near their homes, and who shop several times a week to get the freshest possible selection. Home delivery is competing with large retailers.

Residents Seek Cultural Gathering Spaces

Yet Wyandotte County residents do not feel their needs are being met. In interviews we held with 56 residents and experts, respondents expressed deep disappointment they could not shop at stores that were also cultural gathering places.

¹ In this report, the name “Kansas City” refers to Kansas City, Kansas, unless specifically stated as Kansas City, Missouri, or as the broader Kansas City metropolitan area.

Latinos we interviewed named El Torito, Bonito Michoacan, and Sun Fresh Market as the primary places where they shop for their culturally relevant groceries, but one pointed out that while these are important gathering spaces, their size is limited. One Latino grocer, we were told, hopes to build an entire Mercado that would provide more of such space and a stronger ambience.

African-Americans mentioned that they often are not comfortable shopping in stores with Spanish language signage, and would prefer stores that offer an African-American cultural feel. Many simply looked for stores that are neighborhood gathering points where they can meet others who live nearby. One group of African-American leaders called very pointedly for a cooperatively-owned grocery (See Appendix K).

Kansas City is a National Leader in Urban Food Production

Kansas City residents are not limited to purchasing food. Indeed, the city has become a national leader in urban food production. This is a strength upon which the UG can build.

Cultivate Kansas City has drawn national attention for its persistent efforts to build a base of food production inside city limits. The New Roots for Refugees Farm Training Program at Juniper Gardens, a collaboration between Cultivate Kansas City and Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas, currently hosts farmers from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burma, and Bhutan. To date, Juniper Training Farm has graduated 20 farmers, 17 of whom farm commercially. The farms sell food directly to about 300 households through a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. The program has developed a “Veggie ID” resource page to help consumers make use of the items they find at market and in CSA shares. Unfortunately, the CSA shares are largely distributed outside of the urban core to more prosperous clients, to Kansas City, Missouri, or to group pick-up sites. Program leaders think that offering delivery options has proved important to increasing CSA enrollment.

When including sales from the Gibbs Road Farm, Cultivate Kansas City farms reports that its farms sold \$304,000 worth of produce and CSA shares in 2016. Similar to the New Roots program, most of their produce is sold outside of Wyandotte County, with produce going to Kansas City, Missourians and northern Johnson County, KS residents. This may seem like a relatively small amount, but it is nearly triple their 2007 sales. Moreover, it constitutes 10% of all farm product sales reported by county farms. In 2012, the year of the most recent Census of Agriculture, Cultivate Kansas City’s two farms sold 61% of all produce sold by farms in the county.

Kansas City, Kansas, also hosts 24 community garden sites, where dozens of residents grow their own food. Gardeners can draw upon a metropolitan-wide network of support in their endeavors.

Significant Gaps Remain

Despite these strengths, significant gaps exist in the Wyandotte County food system. One of the key gaps is a lack of physical and other infrastructure that creates efficient community food trade, and connects farmers more closely with consumers, as prior reports have noted.

Given income inequalities, however, such investments will not in themselves address the food needs of lower-income residents. Federal data show that 32,723 county residents collected

SNAP benefits in 2011, or 20% of the population. This was a substantial rise from 12,516 (8%) in 2000 (Federal Census 2011-2015).

The food bank, Harvesters, along with its partner pantries, works diligently to reduce food insecurity. 36,200 unique residents (11,200 households) of Wyandotte County rely on the Harvesters network for some food assistance. Another 40,000 residents are vulnerable because they earn less than a living wage. What were once considered “emergency” programs have become a permanent part of the food landscape.

Residents Suffer from Significant Food-Related Disease

A lack of proper food and exercise is costly to county residents. As of 2015, 13% of Wyandotte County residents had been diagnosed with diabetes (Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2015). This stands as the ninth-highest rate for any county in Kansas, and is considerably above the state rate of 10% (Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2015). The American Diabetes Association estimates that the medical costs for treating diabetes and related conditions in the state of Kansas are \$2 billion per year (American Diabetes Association, 2012).

Resident Purchasing Power is Substantial

Current market conditions favor the importation of food from distant places. County residents spend at least \$450 million (conservatively estimated) each year buying food sourced outside the region.

This spending represents both a community asset and a liability. At the current time, this contributes to a weakened county economy by siphoning money to other regions of the U.S. and globally. Yet it simultaneously represents a significant market for food that Wyandotte County farmers and food processors could strive to reach.

Commodity Farms Struggle

Most of the 164 commercial farms left in the western section of the county are having difficulty, as well. One adjusted for inflation, Wyandotte County farmers earned \$6.5 million less in net cash income in 2015 than they had earned in 1969. Some have sold their land for development, while those that remained doubled their farm productivity, but the economic strength of the farm sector as a whole declined. Since 1994, the most reliable way of earning net income as a farm owner has been to rent out land for someone else to farm — not by producing crops or livestock.

Food Stamps Have Become an Important Economic Engine

In a bizarre twist, a county with a strong agricultural heritage now finds that food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) benefits have become more important in sourcing food than farming. SNAP recipients brought \$40 million into Wyandotte County in 2015, much of which was spent buying groceries at local stores and farmers markets.

This suggests that building local food trade is an exceptional economic development opportunity. If Wyandotte County were able to connect more local residents directly to local farms, impacts could be quite large. Even if each resident spent only \$5 each week buying food directly from any farm in the county, this would result in an additional \$42 million of income for those farmers. This is fourteen times current sales made by county farms.

Emerging Initiatives

Responding to resident concerns about food access, Wyandotte County has implemented several programs and policies that effectively create access to healthy food and promote self-sufficiency. It has adopted zoning codes that deem agriculture a permitted use in residential districts, established special use permits for backyard hen keeping, classified farmers' markets as accessory uses in many districts, and launched the H2O to Grow program offering grants to increase water access for community gardens.

Mayor Holland's initiative to form a public-private partnership to build a grocery store as part of a Healthy Campus near downtown would serve as a dramatic expansion of these efforts. The UG hopes to invest as much as \$16 million (Reno, 2017) to achieve this vision, offering to pay for construction of a new grocery store that would be operated by a private firm. This store would be adjacent to other organizations and businesses that promote healthy lifestyles.

Taking such a step to invest in a cluster of firms addressing health would place Kansas City and Wyandotte County in a position of bold leadership nationally. Furthermore, this action holds the potential for creating equitable access to healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate foods for low-income residents, if additional steps are taken.

Comprehensive Vision and Action Required

This will require that the UG adopt more comprehensive initiatives. During interviews addressing the possibility of expanding food production in the county, UG leaders took the position that they are waiting for a developer to come forward that would both establish a vision and invest in it. Our experience suggests that such a strategy will fail. The changes that need to be made are systemic and long-term, not suited to the rapid return on investment that developers typically seek. These changes will only come about if UG officials become proactive, working with residents to frame an effective, pragmatic, and inclusive vision, and then crafting proper incentives so that developers and other investors find financial reasons to promote the civic vision.

Leaders of Healthy Communities Wyandotte have proposed that one effective way for the UG to establish a lasting commitment to food access is to amend the 2008 City Wide Master Plan. Indeed, this plan mentions food only once and only as it pertains to providing food and habitat for fish and wildlife. Yet the Plan's stated vision (page 1) is to support healthy neighborhoods; A fundamental aspect of healthy neighborhoods is consistent access to healthy food.

One of the Plan's intentions is "to recognize, reinforce, and enhance established neighborhood identity and sense of place." What a healthy neighborhood or community looks like is never defined or detailed in a way that accounts for food, food access, nutrition, or food production (with the exception of agriculture being an acceptable use in some areas). Moreover, since the 2008 Plan was constructed under the vision of former Mayor Joe Reardon, it does not reflect current Mayor Mark Holland's priorities on improving local health outcomes.

However, residents we interviewed do not perceive that the lack of access to grocery stores is the biggest issue they face. Almost everyone involved in focus groups readily named three or more stores where they shop routinely. Each knew the strengths and weaknesses of each store

quite vividly. Many mentioned that they have difficulty getting to these stores, or eating well, for a variety of reasons.

The largest concern residents expressed was about being marginalized. Most felt they had little access to political power to shape the public discourse, little commitment from public officials to address their needs, and limited responsiveness from food businesses.

Moreover, low-income and marginalized residents face multiple issues at once, and these cannot be resolved simply by launching a new program. This was eloquently portrayed by one resident we interviewed: “Families and households are so marginalized already. We need a whole systems approach. We can’t just chip away at one thing, it’s so layered. Is the gas and electricity on at the house? Do they have cutlery? Pots and pans? Cooking skills? It’s all present. It’s all urgent. We need to serve the whole person. We need more collaboration.”

Our Recommendations

A. First and foremost, the **UG must assert civic leadership that is committed over the long haul to ensuring safe and healthy neighborhoods that include access to healthy foods — as well as the freedom, and connectedness, to shape public policy and to live healthy lifestyles based on community values.**

Specifically, we suggest that the **UG Master Plan be amended to reflect this commitment and to establish long-term political will.** We suggest specific language below.

B. Food system leaders in Wyandotte County should **commit themselves to building a community-based food system**, not simply a “local” food system. See page 7. This food system should be centered upon efforts to grow more food within the County, with priority on urban parcels, and priority in ensuring that marginalized residents can own and operate emerging food businesses. Efforts to train new farmers must be made permanent, with economic incentives appropriate for new small to larger scale farms, as well as for farmers wishing to expand their operations. Ongoing support must be given to immigrant farmers who wish to engage in local food trade. Wherever possible, food trade should connect Wyandotte County farms with Wyandotte County residents to build stronger economic, cultural, and social networks.

C. Persistent outreach efforts must **engage Wyandotte County residents** — at all income levels — to support community food businesses. Specifically, we encourage campaigns such as the “Buy Five Dollars from a local farmer each week campaign, as adopted in other states, which could bring \$42 million to county farmers.

D. Wyandotte County **food system leaders, in collaboration with the UG, and business leaders should host an annual community-based food summit.** Hosting such an annual gathering will raise the visibility both of community foods efforts and the need to eat better to attain better health outcomes. In turn, this will hopefully encourage more residents to place a priority on purchasing food from local farms and improving their nutrition practices.

E. Wyandotte County must **raise funds to specifically invest in community-food-system development.** This might be accomplished internally by issuing municipal bonds, or creating a special sales tax levy, or expanding allocations for small business development funds to specifically incentivize health initiatives. External sources of money, such as New Market Tax

Credits, philanthropic dollars, federal and state funds, should also be raised. Public and private funds should be dedicated to ensure that local businesses are informed of and take advantage of local investment opportunities.

F. With regard to the Healthy Campus, our team recommends that any store that may be invited to locate in conjunction with the YMCA be invited to **open up two stores** — one at the campus, and another that is located in Northeast in a smaller format.

G. Local food system leaders should **build a solid leadership network** that effectively coordinates local foods activity in an inclusive manner.

H. Wyandotte County food system leaders, in collaboration with the UG, should **coordinate with Greater Kansas City efforts to brand foods that are grown in the region**. As one example, the UG might wish to launch “Best in Wyandotte” awards that showcase community health and wealth practitioners. More on branding is mentioned in the Northeast Kansas Food Hub Feasibility Study (Flaccavento, *et al.*, 2014).

I. **Revise the Mobile Vending ordinance** to specifically allow for mobile food retail in residentially zoned areas. Additional policy actions are outlined in Appendix I.

J. **Maximize Use of Federal Food Assistance Programs**. In particular, foster SNAP (Supplemental Assistance Nutrition Program, formerly called food stamps) enrollment so that all those eligible receive benefits. While these benefits are a stopgap measure, they are an important safety net. SNAP brought \$41 million into the Wyandotte County economy in 2015, directly benefitting low-income residents, farmers, and grocers. This program already involves a significant part of the county population: 20% of county residents currently receive food stamps. Additional benefits are extended to seniors through the Seniors Farmers Market Coupons, and use of these should also be maximized.

Our recommendations might be summed up as follows: Wyandotte County needs to have the political will to operate in a proactive manner to achieve a long-term vision. If the political will doesn't exist, it needs to be created.

As noted above, our team recommends that this initiative be framed as a “community-based food initiative,” rather than as a “local food initiative.” This is because the competitive advantage any local effort to produce and distribute food to local consumers is based on the loyalties the initiative builds among community members. This is most clear when the price of locally grown produce exceeds the price a consumer could pay for a similar product that is imported. At such times, will a consumer purchase a green pepper raised in her community over one that was imported from Mexico, Canada, or Holland? Will a consumer opt to purchase primarily products from sources in their community, or will they favor other attributes?

As a community-based food initiative, then the initiative itself must build community capacities and resilience as it moves toward its goals.

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STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following 56 people made significant time and informational contributions to this study by partaking in interviews and offering data useful to our research. We are indebted to all.

We also held detailed conversations with 24 residents in five small groups. These interviews provided us deep insight into the experiences of African-American, Latino, Karen, and other communities in Kansas City, Kansas. We have not listed the names of these residents to ensure each could speak freely.

First name	Last name	Organization	Position	Location
Lindsay	Behgam	KC Mayor’s Office	Director of Community Relations	KC, KS
Emily	Brown	Food Equality Initiative	CEO and President	KC, KS
Nozella	Brown	KSU Research & Extension	Director	KC, KS
Bethany	Buchanan	New Roots for Refugees	Americorps Vista	KC, KS
Elizabeth	Burger	The Sunflower Foundation	Coordinator of Healthy Living & Active Communities	Topeka, KS
Alyssa	Carodine	UG—Health Department	Program Coordinator	KC, KS
Sam	Davis	Cultivate Kansas City	Site Manager & Community Outreach	KC, KS
Sarah	Dehart Faltico	Cultivate Kansas City	Program Manager	KC, MO
Xavier	Domenech	Domenech Expressions Interpreters	Owner	Overland Park, KS
Dawn	Gabel	National Agriculture Center	Director and CEO	Bonner Springs, KS
Teresa	Gerard	Guardian Group	CEO	Lawrence, KS
Marlon	Goff	UG—Economic Development	Former Urban Redevelopment Manager	KC, KS
Carlos	Gomez	Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City	Executive Director	KC, MO
Angela	Greene	Resident		KC, KS
Shery	Greene	Resident		KC, KS
Sarah	Hartwig	UG—Health Department	Americorp VISTA	KC, KS
Beau	Heyen	Episcopal Community Services	President & Chief Executive Officer	KC, MO
Jamie	Hickey	UG—Urban Planning	Planner	KC, KS
Peter	Ho	CarrBaierCrandall Real Estate Group	Vice President	KC, KS
Joe	Jennings	J-14 Farm	Farmer Owner	KC, KS
Jessica	Kejr	Harvesters	Director of Program Services	KC, MO

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Katherine	Kelly	Cultivate Kansas City	Executive Director	KC, KS
Jason	Kelso	Rollin' Grocer	Founder/COO	KC, MO
Ryan	Kepley	Harvesters	Agency Services Manager	KC, MO
Matt	Kleinmann	Dotte Agency, University of Kansas	Doctoral Student	Lawrence, KS
Amanda	Lindahl	KC Community Gardens	Community Engagement Coordinator	KC, MO
Jennifer	Long	UG—Nutrition	Community Outreach	KC, KS
Beth	Low-Smith	KC Healthy Kids	Vice President	KC, KS
Richard	Mabion	KCK NAACP	Founder/CEO	KC, KS
Shelley	Mann	Harvesters	SNAP Outreach	KC, MO
Megan	Masson-Minock	ENP & Associates	Principal	Ann Arbor, MI
Andrea	Mathew	Kansas City Community Gardens	Program Director	KC, MO
Becca	McAndrew	Westside Family Church	Service and Mission Organizer	Lenexa, KS
Rachel	McGinnis Millsap	KC Healthy Kids	Director, Farm to School Academy	KC, KS
Monica	Mendez	Latino Health for All	Community Mobilizer	KC, KS
Shawn	Meyer	Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City	Director of Governmental Affairs	KC, MO
Wayne	Parks	FreshFarmHQ	Director of Operations	KC, KS
Cedric	Patton	Quindaro Urban Improvement Club	President	KC, KS
Wendy	Peters Moschetti	Livewell Colorado	Food Policy Director	Denver, CO
Ingrid	Perez Esquivar	Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City	Intern	KC, MO
David	Procter	Kansas Rural Grocery Initiative	Executive Director	Manhattan
Linda	Quinn	Resident		KC, KS
Dave	Reno	Downtown Shareholders of KCK	Communications Consultant	KC, KS
Natasha	Ria El-Scari	Rollin' Grocer	Founder/CEO	KC, MO
Rob	Richardson	UG—Urban Planning	Director of Planning	KC, KS
Nancy	Sanchez	UG—WIC	WIC Program Director	KC, KS
Chuck	Schlittler	Downtown Shareholders of KCK	Director	KC, KS
Joan	Shearer	Cider Hill Family Orchard	Owner, Operator	KC, KS
Chris	Slaughter	UG—County Land Bank	Land Bank Manager	KC, KS
Jon	Stephens	UG—Economic Development	Interim Director	KC, KS
Kirk	Suther	UG—Public Works	Program Coordinator	KC, KS
Tekia	Thompson	Life Around the Table Catering	Owner, Operator	Johnson County, KS
Cardelia	Walker	Resident		KC, KS
Meredith	Walrafen	New Roots for Refugees	Program Coordinator	KC, KS

Leslie	Wilson	KC Healthy Kids	Policy Assistant	KC, KS
Heather	Wooten	ChangeLab Solutions	Vice President of Programs	Oakland, CA

In addition to one-on-one interviews, our consulting team participated in several focus groups and community listening sessions among diverse communities. These allowed us to gather insights from residents about the issues that concerned them the most. Appendix A outlines the questions that were posed.

The following focus groups were held, coordinated by local partners and Alyssa Carodine of UG Health.

Food Systems Action Team Meeting, February 17, 2017, at the UG Health Department.

Riverview Health Clinic (featuring simultaneous Spanish translation) hosted a small group of Hispanic residents, convened by Cristal Perez, on June 3, 2017.

Vernon Center, with the assistance of Jennifer Long of UG—Area Agency on Aging, invited us to join a senior citizens group to discuss food concerns on June 5, 2017.

Hilltop Neighborhood Association: Chair Inez Swindell convened and facilitated a June 5, 2017 discussion of food issues among association board members and other residents.

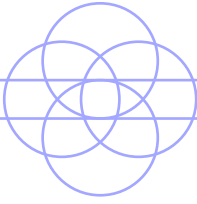
Northeast Neighborhoods Elnora Tellis Jefferson convened a group of experienced community leaders to address food issues in Northeast on June 7, 2017 (See the recommendations these residents made in Appendix K, page 96).

Diligent efforts were also made by Health Communities Wyandotte to convene focus groups representing recent refugee populations, but found this to be impossible.

Consultants also attended public meetings to gather further information about food and land issues in the County:

Neighborhood and Community Development Committee Meeting, June 5, 2017, at the Municipal Office Building.

Community Health Assessment Listening Session June 7, 2017, at the KCKPL South Branch.



INTRODUCTION

“Good bones” is a phrase residents use to describe the neighborhoods and communities in Kansas City, Kansas. They say the neighborhoods are “well-built,” with deep commitment and pride in their own community. Yet the city is disparate, varying greatly from one side of town to the next, with distinct enclaves throughout.

Truly a city of neighborhoods, the town now known as Kansas City, Kansas, consolidated several communities that formed independently in the 19th Century, largely on the land that once made up Wyandot, a settlement of the Wyandot Tribe who fled dangerous conditions in Ohio in 1843, purchasing land along the Kansas River from Delaware Indians. (Morgan, 1911, Kansas Historical Society, 2016) Shawneetown formed near what is now 35th and Shawnee Drive, centered around the prophet Tenskwatawa. The original Methodist Shawnee Mission was also built in Turner. Free State settlers purchased land from the Wyandot in 1856 to create Quindaro, with an open harbor that allowed a free point of entry into Kansas for emigrants from the east. Quindaro thrived around a prosperous lumber milling industry. Other independent settlements, such as Argentine (named after a silver smelting firm that was built on Shawnee reservation land), Armstrong (built on the hill above the Union Pacific shops) and Armourdale (named after a meat packing firm) were built nearby.

The town of Kansas City, Kansas was first organized as a town company in 1868. Strawberry Hill was originally named Splitlog Hill after the Native American owner of a lumber mill who owned the land. By the end of the 19th Century it became an enclave of Croatian, Slovenian, Serbian, and Russian immigrants. Quindaro was an important location on the Underground Railroad during the Civil War, and African-American residents have since clustered in the Northeast as well as in Rosedale.

In the 1830s, the Santa Fe Trail facilitated Western commerce and migration (Rodriguez, 2014). The first large-scale populations of Latinos arrived in the late 1800s, often filling jobs with the railroads and at the Armour meat plant. The Argentine neighborhood was at one time the location of camps (*campes*) where Mexican workers who had been brought in by train in boxcars resided. Many of these communities were displaced to higher ground by the 1951 flood. This led the Kansas City schools to desegregate for the first time (Rodriguez, 2014).

Bonner Springs, as one of the state’s oldest cities, maintains a separate existence as part of three cities included in Wyandotte County. That town was formed in 1812, when the Chouteau family established Four Houses, the first European trading post in Kansas. Another self-standing town, Edwardsville, was created in 1869 on land that the Delaware chief Half Moon once owned (Blackmar, 1912).

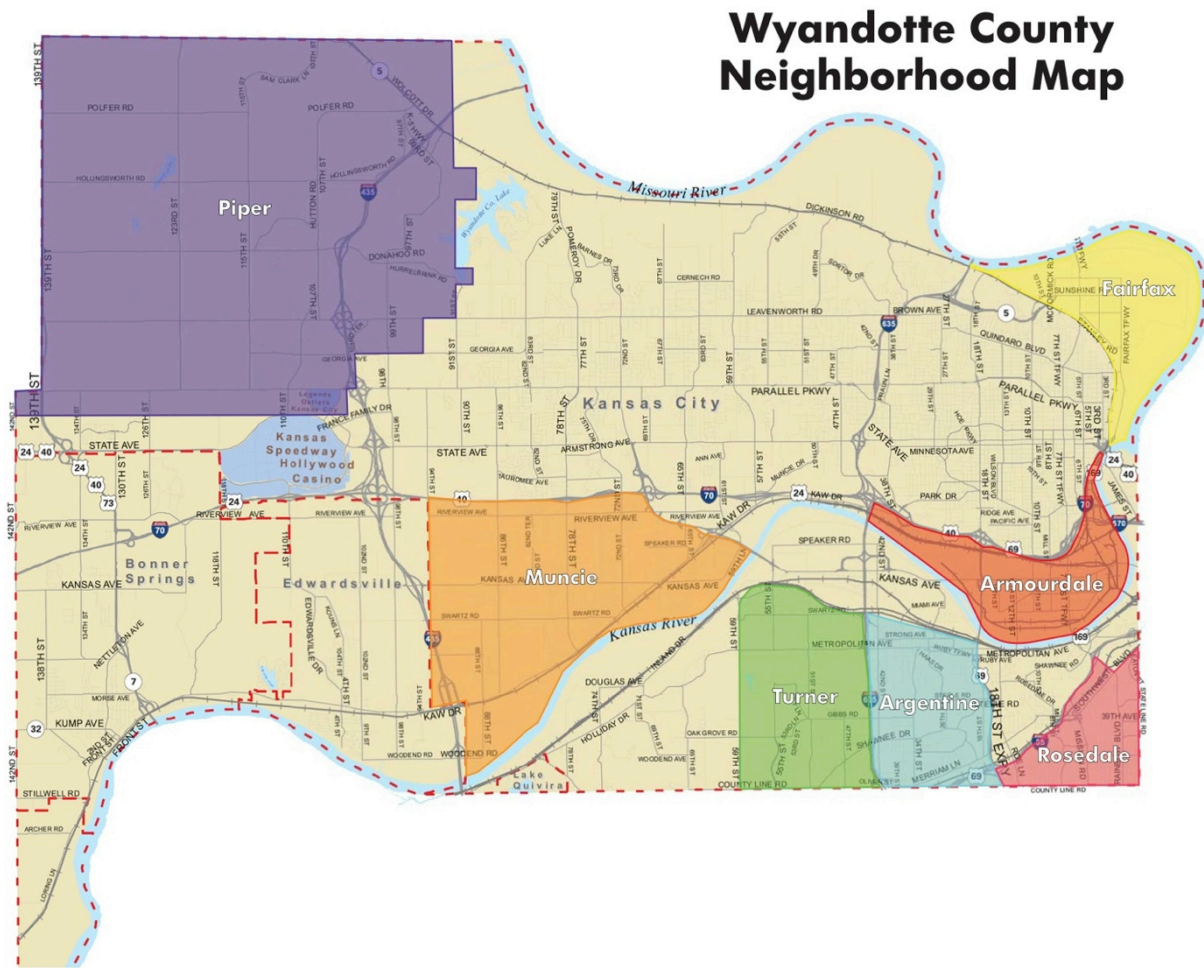
The city expanded rapidly beginning in the 1880s as a bedroom community for Kansas City, Missouri. Rising populations placed more demands on civic services, so Armstrong was annexed into Wyandotte in 1881, and five years later, Armourdale, Wyandotte (with a new spelling), and Kansas City, Kansas were all consolidated into a single city. As population peaked, the city

continued to grow through annexation and consolidation (see Appendix B). Piper was its final annexation in 1991 before the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas was formed in 1997.

Despite annexation and geographic growth, the area suffered through decades of depopulation (Wyandotte County peaked in 1969 at 186,986 people, falling to a low of 153,869 in 2006). A common refrain we heard is that “anyone who could leave has left.” Yet new Latino immigrants arrive daily, including those who have been gentrified out of communities across the river and are finding new homes in Northeast Kansas City, as well as in more established enclaves south and west of downtown. More than 1,100 Karen immigrants (from Burma) have located in the city.

The number of residents has increased steadily over the past decade, and now stands at 163,831 (Bureau of Economic Analysis; Census Bureau, 2016). Those who have stayed here or settled here hold great interest in retaining and building local wealth, health, and connectivity, despite the fact that a limited population base means property taxes tend to be relatively high (Armstrong, *et al.*, n.d.).

MAP 1: WYANDOTTE COUNTY NEIGHBORHOOD MAP



Source: UG—Economic Development 2017

This means neighborhoods hold unique and individual identities centered upon cultures that persist today. Although this contributes to Kansas City's rich and diverse identity, it also contributes to a pervasive sense of "us and them," which challenges broad investment efforts. Moreover, the expansion of the metropolitan area also created other schisms. Major retail, entertainment, and industrial developments in the outer, suburban and peri-urban areas have left the inner city underserved, giving rise to feelings of disenfranchisement. As population in Wyandotte County declined, nearby Johnson County saw growth of 170% (Bureau of Economic Analysis, covering 1969-2015, see also Chart 6 on p. 79). This hollowing of the urban core has left some residents with poor access to basic amenities. Even some of the suburban strip malls have failed as demographics and consumer tastes have shifted. This held political ramifications as well. One Black leader noted that when the Unified Government was formed, the altered political dynamics lead to a loss of Black representation in civic decisions.

Certainly these issues are not unique to Kansas City, Kansas. Urban areas have long suffered the consequences of "white flight," where middle-income families leave urban areas for single-family homes in the suburbs, taking their tax dollars, purchasing power, and retailers with them. Yet interim Economic Development Director Jon Stephens describes Kansas City's wealth drain as worse than in other communities. As Map 1 shows, suburban areas are still gaining population rapidly, while the city itself is losing residents.

Yet these conditions also mean that the city is one of the most diverse in the state, with important cultural enclaves of African-Americans, Latinos, and Asian-Americans. More than 50 different languages are spoken by residents. This diversity extends beyond culture and race, moving across the spectrum of socioeconomic indicators as well. This includes household income and wealth, educational attainment, and even health outcomes. A socioeconomic profile of Wyandotte County is featured in Appendix C.

Healthy Communities Wyandotte, a program of the Unified Government Public Health Department, commissioned this study in order to better hear about and understand the everyday lives of Kansas City residents, and how they interact with the local food system. Healthy Communities Wyandotte (HCW) is charged with the mission of making Wyandotte County the most improved county for health in the state of Kansas through innovative leadership and community partnerships. The purpose of this study is then "to strengthen local community networks, promote health, and retain local wealth through economic activity generated in local communities," with a specific focus on strengthening the community's food system.

Even though the county's cost of living is very reasonable in comparison the rest of the U.S., poverty and food insecurity are ever-present. Wyandotte County hosts pockets of invisible, rural poor populations living in what would otherwise be considered a wealthy and middle-class suburban fringe. As one travels east, into the peri-urban corridor and then into the urban core, food insecure households live next to prosperous ones. East of I-635, there are fewer full-service grocery stores, households are less likely to have access to adequate transportation, income is lower, and there is a greater diversity of cultures and thus food habits. As such, two families living on the same block may be experiencing very different food environments, and thus very different degrees of food insecurity and self-sufficiency.

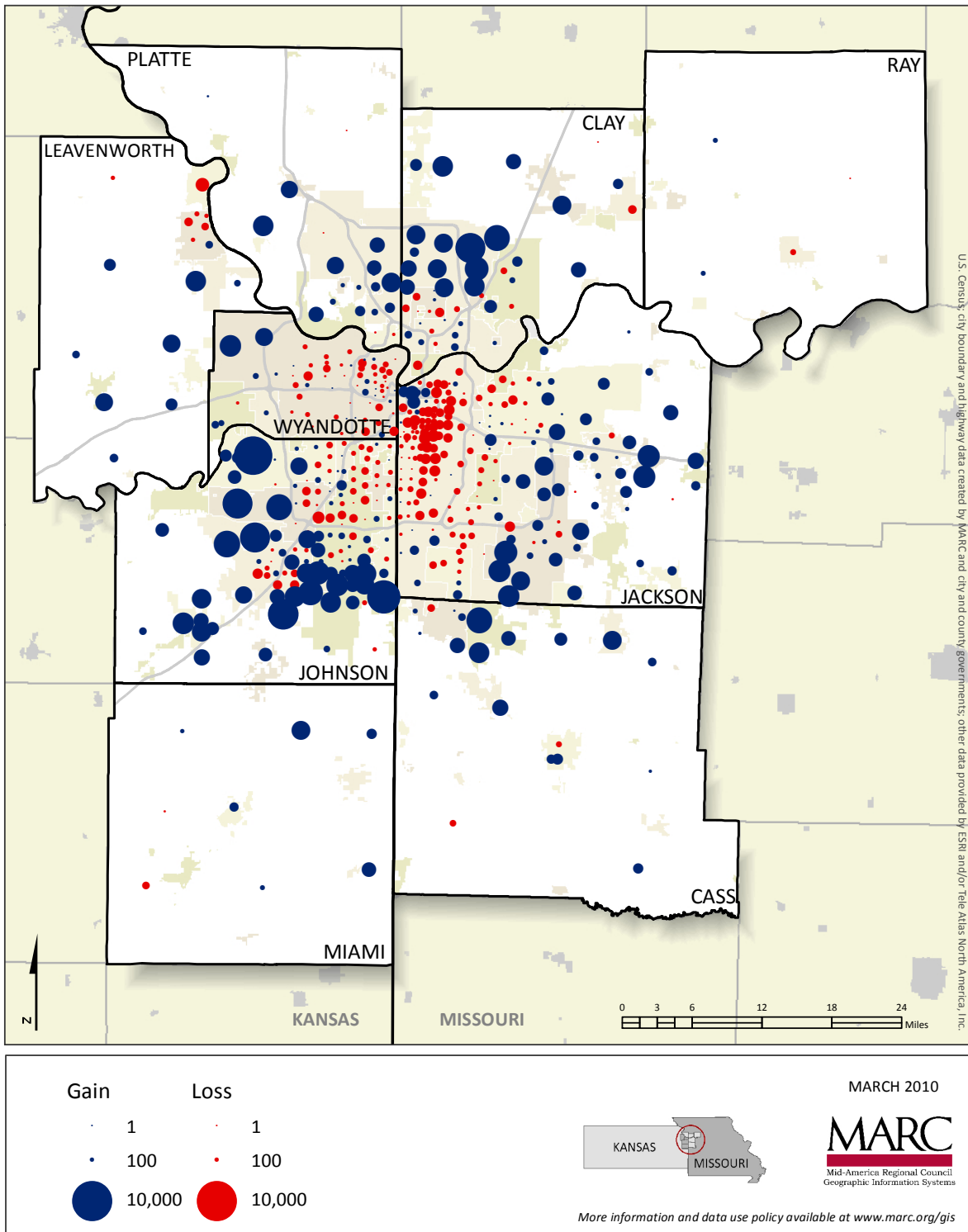
In order to strengthen community networks, local residents, in addition to organizational leaders, must be engaged in the processes of analyzing current conditions and working to improve them. To solicit their ideas, 56 organizational leaders and high-level food systems stakeholders were interviewed in person over two different weeks.

Two families living on the same block may be experiencing very different food environments, and thus very different degrees of food insecurity and self-sufficiency.

Five focus groups with 24+ attendees were also convened, designed to ensure that diverse voices would be included, with strong representation from African-American and Latino residents especially. The names of those who participated in focus groups are kept confidential so each might speak openly about their personal experiences and concerns. Consultants also attended two public meetings regarding community health and neighborhood development. In this next section — Living and Eating at the Rural-Urban Boundary — the voices of leaders and residents are interwoven with secondary data from federal databases and previous assessments whenever appropriate to paint a comprehensive picture of what it is currently like to live and eat in a small, unique city in the heart of America’s Great Plains. Another section of the study — Rebuilding Food Access and Community Wealth — describes current efforts to improve healthy food access and food systems development. The final section outlines our conclusions and recommends strategic action steps for the future.



MAP 2: POPULATION CHANGE IN GREATER METRO AREA, 2000-2010



Source: Mid-America Regional Council, 2017. Note that the era of “white flight” began after World War II, earlier than the decade shown on this map.



LIVING AND EATING AT THE RURAL-URBAN BOUNDARY

Consumer Food Environment, Expenditures, and Security

Retail Options

Wyandotte County has a relatively rich food retail environment, boasting many culturally identified groceries, stores and food manufacturers of all sizes, five farmers' markets, a solid cluster of productive urban farms, dozens of community gardens, and orchards that are open for community members to freely harvest.

Quite unique to Kansas is the city's concentration of locally and/or independently owned grocery stores. Of the 10 largest national grocery retail chains, only 2 — Wal-Mart and ALDI — have locations in Kansas City, Kansas. Instead, smaller chains, such as those operated by Balls Food, dominate the market. For example, multiple Hen House, Price Chopper, and Sun Fresh stores are all present in the Kansas City metro area; these stores are owned and operated by Balls Foods.

Yet despite this proud tradition of independent ownership, we heard considerable concern that national chains such as Wal-Mart were taking over and compromising the viability of independent stores. This sentiment originates among people who remember when smaller stores were close to residential areas, and strongly served each neighborhood. It also reflects residents' awareness that the grocery industry has consolidated across the country, resulting in 20 years of small store closures and large, box store openings (Rohrer, 2016). These larger footprint stores require bigger consumer bases to stay afloat, thus they locate in areas with growing populations and rising incomes, or hope to pull in a mobile population from surrounding areas- areas unlike many neighborhoods in Kansas City, Kansas.

Yet in many urban regions, grocers are opting to open smaller-format stores once again that appeal to urban professionals who wish to walk to stores near their homes, and who shop several times a week to get the freshest possible selection. Bloomberg Intelligence concludes that "Whole Foods, Kroger and Ahold are among food retailers introducing smaller, more limited-assortment stores that deliver convenience and affordability....[This] new breed of food retailer focused on convenience may mean locations are determined less by income bracket than by lifestyle choices" (Bartashus, 2016). Nielsen Research reports that "For in-store retailing, large stores have a sales volume advantage, but smaller formats are growing more rapidly."

Nationally, home delivery is competing with large retailers though boxed meal services and grocery retailers alike. They note that e-commerce can offer deeper product selections than brick-and-mortar stores can, and add that the "growth of online shopping is driven in part by the maturation of the digital natives — Millennials and Generation Z" (Nielsen, 2015).

Adding complexity to this issue for Kansas City itself is that, while one full-service grocery store closed in 2016, several discount stores offering more limited food options have opened in recent years. This means that while the number of stores may be increasing, the breadth of consumer choice is declining.

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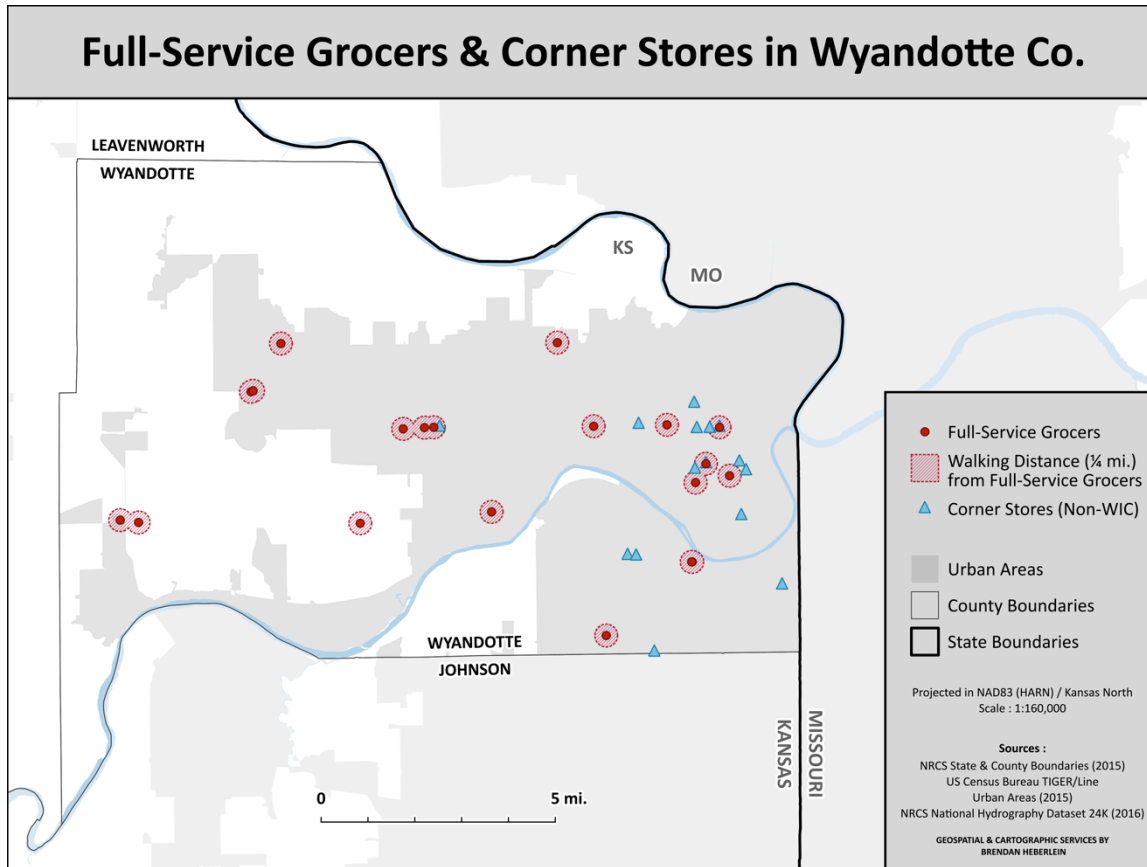
Residents of Northeast Kansas City, however, mostly report the demise of larger supermarkets. They felt that while the community had supported these grocers, that attention was not reciprocated. We were told that the stores that had gone under were neglected by their managers and ownership for a long time before they closed. Many were

neither offering the freshest items, nor were kept clean. One of our respondents had been told by workers that when one grocery in the western part of the city core closed, it was a profitable store, but not profitable enough to suit the owners, who felt they could make more money elsewhere. Another interviewed stakeholder reflected on this closing:

I never looked at grocery stores as a survival mechanism for a community. Nothing about the closing of this store is 'right' — the parking lot was always full, they were always buying advertisements, and stocking shelves, there were no signs that it was failing. And then it closed suddenly. It's the first time I concerned myself with social justice.

The food retail climate has also changed in the Argentine neighborhood. When the area lost its last remaining grocery store in 2005, the neighborhood association set a goal of opening “a grocery store that provides affordable, quality, healthy food in a low-income neighborhood.” A Save-A-Lot was recruited with \$3 million in tax increment financing, low interest loans, and grants in 2012, opening in 2013 (Polk, 2015; Mitchell, 2012). Similar efforts were made to recruit a Wal-Mart Neighborhood Market (their smaller footprint store) to the same superfund site in 2014 (Campbell, 2014). A Dollar General is also located nearby and a new police station was built. A new bus line started serving the neighborhood in 2014 as well. The bus stop is on the outer edges of the Wal-Mart parking lot and features a cart corral. When the consultants visited this location, the Wal-Mart parking lot was full and the Save-A-Lot parking area held few cars. Residents said this was typical.

MAP 3: FULL-SERVICE GROCERS & CORNER STORES 2017



Source: Matt Kleinmann, 2017. For a comparison of food stores and pantries with poverty areas, see Map 6, page 39.

Currently, Wyandotte County has 18 full-service grocery stores, as Map 3 shows. That is one store for each 9,000 residents. This might be considered an adequate number of stores, if all residents had access to a vehicle for their shopping runs. Yet 10% of Wyandotte County households have no access to a vehicle (Federal Census, 2011-2015), and this ratio is higher in lower-income urban tracts. For such neighborhoods with limited transportation options, experts such as Matt Kleinmann recommend that to adequately reach shoppers, fresh foods should be available less than a one-quarter mile walk from each home. Map 3 shows this walking distance around each grocery. If the needs of those without cars, or challenged in walking, are considered, food access is far more problematic.

In theory, corner stores can help fill this vacuum. Yet, as Map 3 also shows, nine of the city's 14 corner grocery stores are quite close to full-service grocers. Few are within walking distance of the larger stores, but their proximity suggests that corner stores offer less penetration of underserved neighborhoods than would be desirable. These stores do serve urban core areas, but are located on commercial streets rather than in residential areas. The stores shown here are not WIC-compliant since they do not offer all the foods that WIC requires.²

² WIC compliance is used as a proxy for variety of healthy food offerings.

Full-service groceries are far more scattered in the western parts of the county, where farms are more prevalent, as is also shown on Map 3. Luckily, most residents of these neighborhoods do have cars, Census data show (however, data are not precise enough to show this graphically).

Plans for the Healthy Campus proposed for 10th and Minnesota do little to alter the patterns of where full-service stores can be found in Kansas City, Kansas since this potential new store will be located near existing stores. This may well make solid business sense since a proven market exists in these areas. Yet this location will do little to provide access to those without vehicles, or those looking for a culturally supportive shopping space.

To continue our review of the current grocery context, we turn our attention to Map 4, showing one clear area of growth — the 28 discount groceries in Wyandotte County. Many have concentrated in Northeast KC as other groceries have closed, and many are located in newer buildings with pleasant external facades. These stores specialize in low-cost offerings, but seldom carry a full complement of groceries — notably missing are fresh fruits and vegetables, and fresh or frozen meats. Many do not offer essential WIC items, so are not certified to accept WIC coupons. All the same, people obviously do shop at these stores, and this is one of the fastest growing sectors of grocery retail nationally.

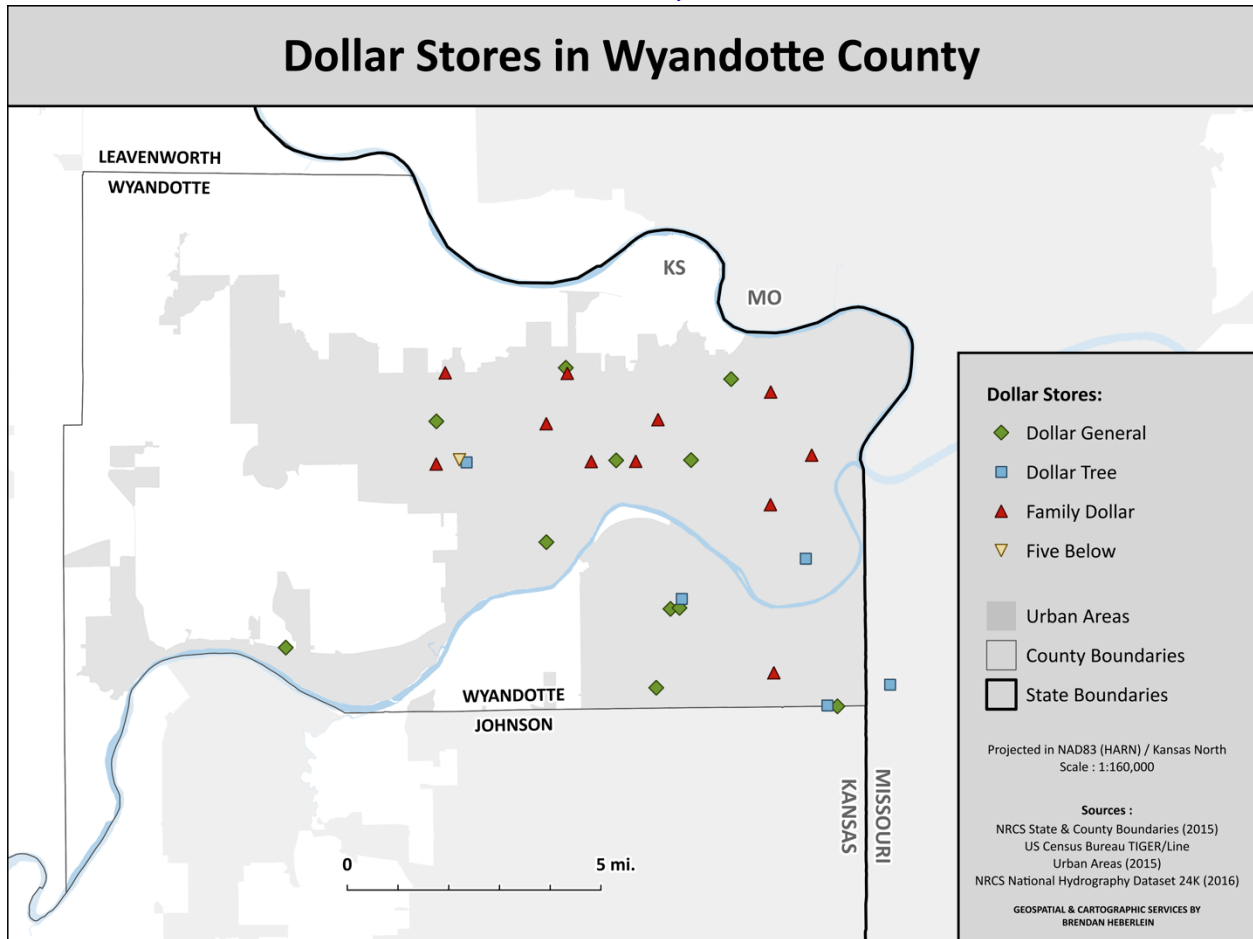
As Map 4 shows, (and for obvious reasons) discount stores tend to locate near low-income areas — and they clearly do respond to growing market demand. Sales at dollar stores nationally grew from \$30 billion to \$45 billion between 2010 and 2015, a 50% growth clip that far outpaced the 17% growth seen by retail overall (Wells, 2017). Yet our respondents also told dire stories about watching people emerge from a dollar store with immense plastic bags full of perhaps a dozen frozen pizzas — certainly not a balanced diet.

One vocal leader also challenged, “I go into the Dollar Store and I can’t find a single thing that was grown or made here.” Our respondents also lamented the fact that they saw neighbors heading to convenience stores to purchase entire meals. Another said, “We need more corner stores in neighborhoods that sell things that people need.”

An otherwise self-reliant farmer mentioned that he only depends on discount stores — the only retailers in his neighborhood — for paper products and other non-essentials. Further, he bemoaned the lack of quality, fresh meat available to him in his community. Once he raised his own chickens, but said he was “shut down” because of complaining neighbors. A successful initiative by Healthy Communities Wyandotte and partners now permits households to keep 6 hens (no roosters are allowed).

One focus group participant also expressed disappointment in the availability of “respectable” meats in any of the area’s stores and markets, and wished for more locally raised meat options.

MAP 4: DISCOUNT RETAILERS IN WYANDOTTE COUNTY, 2017



Source: Matt Kleinmann

Significantly, both Latino and African-American respondents expressed deep disappointment they could not shop at stores that were also cultural gathering places. Latinos named El Torito, Bonito Michoacan, and Sun Fresh Market as the primary places where they shop for their culturally relevant groceries, but one pointed out that while these are important gathering spaces, their size is limited. One Latino grocer, we were told, hopes to build an entire Mercado that would provide more of such space and a stronger ambience. African-Americans mentioned that they often are not comfortable shopping in stores with Spanish language signage, and would prefer stores that offer an African-American cultural feel. Many simply looked for stores that are neighborhood gathering points where they can meet others who live nearby. One group of African-American leaders called very pointedly for a cooperatively-owned grocery (See Appendix K, page 96).

Residents Speak on Quality, Selection, and Affordability

Respondents in several focus groups pointed out that they do considerable planning before deciding where to shop. Most participants could rapidly list the stores they knew, categorized by price levels and quality of meat and produce. One interviewee pointed that many people face a severe time crunch, saying “I can’t go to 5 stores.” This is especially true for those working more than one job. Yet this did not limit their knowledge of what stores were available. Most every

person we interviewed listed at least 3 retail outlets they patronize, depending on their needs and budgets at that time.

Those with access to a vehicle read ads carefully, often choosing which store to shop at during a given week based on the sale prices each store offered. Yet even those who disliked the quality of, say, fresh produce at a given store said they would shop there if an item they sought were offered at an attractive price. Sale pricing turned out to be the main motivator for many shoppers.

Respondents noted in particular that fruit was often too expensive in grocery stores, so they often did without. Getting access to high quality vegetables at an affordable price was not often possible. “It’s impossible on our salary,” one noted, while another noted, “people say we have to have a balanced diet, but we can’t afford that.” Several noted that they limited their purchases to staples such as beans, rice, *platanos* (plantains), and potatoes when prices are affordable. One homemaker watches for sales on items such as carrots that can be frozen. She buys them in quantity when they are on sale, slices and freezes them. Yet she lamented, “You need something fresh, too.” Another said, “We shouldn’t have to choose between black bananas and green bananas.”

Food Equality Initiative founder Emily Brown focused attention on the need for broad food options. She has concluded that “20% of African-American kids are impacted by allergies,” and said that the community requires better food options to manage these conditions. Another community educator described the lack of healthy options at area stores, saying “there are no gluten-free options, there is only one choice for yogurt, and all the frozen vegetables come with some sort of sauce.” A number of interviewees lamented that they have to travel to higher-end stores in Johnson County to purchase items that were better suited their allergies and diets. Others are not able to make such journeys.

One older couple described their dilemma as follows: “I am disabled, my husband works a little. We live paycheck to paycheck. It’s hard to make ends meet. We use food pantries. My doctor says I need green vegetables for my diet, that I need more fruit, I need more to eat. I have low blood sugar and anemia.” This family primarily shops at ALDI because it is cheap, even though they consider the vegetables to be of low quality. The woman went on to describe the good fruit she sees at Sun Fresh, but seldom affords. She considers Price Chopper to be too expensive.

Another resident commented that the opportunities to be educated were more prevalent than the groceries shoppers seek. “There are tons of educational campaigns, workshops, classes, but healthy options aren’t available [at the stores where we shop].”

Even when subsidized prices are available, shoppers do not always take full advantage. Jennifer Long of UG—Nutrition told us that she is able to hand out \$30 coupons to low-income residents so they can obtain extra produce at farmers’ markets. Yet only about 60% of the coupons she hands out are utilized. Her sense is that transportation poses an important barrier. Some interviewees noted that many Latinos are wary of going public places such as agency offices or stores, given current immigration policies.

Several of our respondents also utilize food pantries to supplement the foods they feel they can’t afford at the grocery stores. Many are pleased with the offerings they find there, yet one

person who has had complex medical issues noted that she has to be careful to eat as many fresh fruits and vegetables as possible, and often these are not available at the pantries. At times, the foods available are close to expiration dates, she added.

For many, food access, affordability, and quality are inherently based on perception and value. This is exceedingly difficult to quantify, or to compare affordability and quality across stores, especially in a community as diverse as KCK. Yet, making some attempt to do became a priority for local leaders. In order to examine the extent to which prices and availability are barriers to consuming a healthy, balanced diet for residents of Wyandotte County, the Food Systems Action Team of Healthy Communities Wyandotte gathered primary data from select grocery stores in the county and surrounding areas using a food-store survey developed by the USDA ERS for the *Community Food Security Assessment Toolkit*.³ This survey is based on the USDA’s Thrifty Food Plan (TFP). A list of food items, their prices, and whether or not the specific item was available at surveyed stores, is shown in Appendix F.

The Thrifty Food Plan involves a “standard” week’s worth of meals for a reference family of four that fulfills the USDA’s dietary guidelines. This Plan is also used in calculating food-stamp allotments. In addition to serving as a guide for households with limited food budgets, the national average weekly cost of this meal plan is tracked regularly by USDA in order to give a basis of comparison for determining availability and prices of 87 common foods in a specific community. The availability of foods required for the Thrifty Meal Plan and its weekly costs for each grocery store in the area are summarized in the Tables 1 and 2. Note that this was a simplified survey of prices at a given point in time, and does not reflect overall food costs over a year. It should be taken as a rough guide to prices only. There are also limitations to the TFP since the methodology was devised in the 1980s and list of items does not reflect the actual foods that low-income families eat or cultural differences reflected in what a store may carry.

Table 1: Availability of Common Food Items at Select Grocery Stores in Region, 2017

	JoCo SM	WyCo SM1	Discount 1	Discount 2	WyCo SM 2	Discount 3	Corner 1	Average
# of Missing Items	3	5	31	3	2	7	15	10
% of TFP Items Available	95.6%	92.6%	54.4%	95.6%	97.1%	89.7%	77.9%	85.4%
% of TFP Items Available, National Average by Store Type	81% (large grocer)	81% (large grocer)	51% (small grocer)	51% (small grocer)	51% (small grocer)	81% (large grocer)	51% (small grocer)	
Most Common Missing Food Categories	Fats and Oils	Fresh Fruits; Fresh Grains; Frozen Proteins	Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	Fresh Proteins	Fresh Proteins	Canned fruits, vegetables, and proteins	Fresh grains, fresh Protein, fresh dairy	Fresh Proteins

³ <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EFAN02013/>, Chapter 8.

Table 2: Costs of Thrifty Food Plan by Grocery Stores in Region, 2017

	JoCo SM	WyCo SM1	Discoun t 1	Discoun t 2	WyCo SM 2	Discoun t 3	Corner 1	Average
Average Weekly Cost of TFP ⁴	\$146.84	\$161.80	\$156.48	\$120.74	\$136.68	\$116.75	\$156.64	\$139.31
% Difference from Area Average Cost of TFP	+5.4%	+16.1%	+12.3%	-13.3%	-1.9%	-16.2%	+12.4%	--
% Difference from National Average Cost of TFP for 2017 ⁵	-1.0%	9.1%	5.5%	-18.6%	-7.8%	-21.3%	5.6%	-6.1%
Total Cost of Fresh Fruits	\$15.89	\$16.17	N/A	\$13.37	\$12.47	\$10.63	\$13.27	\$15.73
Total Cost of Fresh Vegetables	\$7.99	\$17.65	N/A	\$9.42	\$9.19	\$8.96	\$31.62	\$26.13

As outlined in Table 2 above, the majority of food items outlined in the Thrifty Food Plan are available at most of the food outlets surveyed in the area. Compared to the national averages (by store category), food availability in grocery stores is not a particularly large issue. Even the small grocers, Discount 1, 2, & 3, and Corner 1, which normally do not carry a wide variety of food items, scored well on this food availability assessment. The most common missing items were ground pork, molasses, and chicken bouillon. Appendix F lists all the Thrifty Food Plan items, their prices, and whether or not they were missing, by store.

Table 2, on the other hand, clearly demonstrates cost discrepancies between stores. The area average cost of the Thrifty Food Plan is 6% lower than the national average for 2017. Although availability of food items is fairly consistent across grocery outlets, prices vary widely.

Transportation and Mobility

Significantly, none of the focus group participants mentioned that the community lacked grocery stores. Yet all expressed concerns about access. The most widespread comment we heard was that transportation to these stores posed a barrier. With 10% of county residents having no vehicle in their household (Federal Census, 2011-2015), and with higher rates in many neighborhoods, this is a significant concern. Yet one respondent added, “We all have cars. When we don’t work, they don’t work.” One interviewee noted, Wyandotte County is “too sprawled out, if you don’t have a car, you’re not going to make it.”

Those without access to a car reported that they often find bus transportation difficult. Buses do not run that often in many districts, and it can be laborious to carry bags full of groceries via public transit. One may wait a long time while fresh food wilts, or melts, or freezes, or may find

⁴ The average price for specific items was used if a store was missing that particular item. For example, Discount 1 was missing several fresh items. The average price from the other stores was used in place of missing items to calculate the cost of the Thrifty Food Plan for Discount 1.

⁵ The reference family for the national average cost of TFP is a family of four with two children between 6 and 11 years old. The weekly national average cost of this plan was \$148.30 in July, 2017.

that bags are too heavy to haul the distance from the bus stop to home. Several reported that they do not feel safe walking in some sections of town.

One group of residents from the Northeast neighborhood pointed out that one may have to walk as much as one-half mile simply to get to a bus stop. For elderly people, or those with disabilities, this poses an immense obstacle. While our respondents noticed the mobility vans were available, these involved considerable wait, and a cost. Taking a taxi (or alternative service) adds extra costs to the grocery bill, which is hardly a favored option for people who are trimming their grocery purchases already.

One strategy people have pursued is to carpool. A neighbor who has a car might announce to their friends that they are heading to the supermarket, inviting others to join. Some of our respondents reported this was a welcome outing — a chance to socialize with people they enjoy, an opportunity to go to stores in distant places with a broader selection, and a chance to get out of familiar settings for a while. Others, however, regarded the store where one shops as a personal choice, or one that was limited by income, making it difficult for some to join a carpool outing. One resident further bemoaned, “Neighbors are not even talking to neighbors anymore.” This lack of connection makes it difficult to make carpool arrangements.

Focus group participants suggested that KCATA should reconfigure bus routes in ways that ensure easy access from lower-income neighborhoods to grocery stores. Some added that having greater access to delivered groceries might be the best approach: “Delivery would work.” A Harvesters representative agreed, “We don’t need more pantries, we need delivery.”

To sum up the retail grocery situation in Kansas City, the number of grocery stores is declining, as Table 3 indicates. In particular, as our respondents noted, smaller neighborhood groceries have given way to larger format full-service stores. Yet one of these larger stores itself fell victim to a new trend, in which grocers are moving toward smaller formats. Established retailers are exploring direct delivery options: options that are often not designed with low-income shoppers in mind, but a service that perhaps low-income shoppers could most benefit from.

Table 3: Food Retail Environment in Wyandotte County

	2007	2012	2016/17 ⁶
Grocery Stores	23	25	19
Supercenters	1	3	2
Convenience/Dollar Stores	62	60	43+ ⁷
Specialized Food Stores	12	10	NC
Farmers’ markets	NC	NC	4
CSAs	3	3	3

Source: USDA Food Environment Atlas. See footnotes below. NC means no count located.

⁶ 2007 and 2012 food retail counts are from the USDA Food Environment Atlas. 2016/2017 counts are based on efforts by the steering committee and stakeholders involved in this study.

⁷ This count includes small, limited option corner stores and dollar stores, but not gas stations or other convenience stores.

Yet Kansas City residents are not limited to purchasing food. Indeed, the city has become a national leader in urban food production, and this is a strength upon which the UG can build.

Urban Agriculture and Farmers' Markets

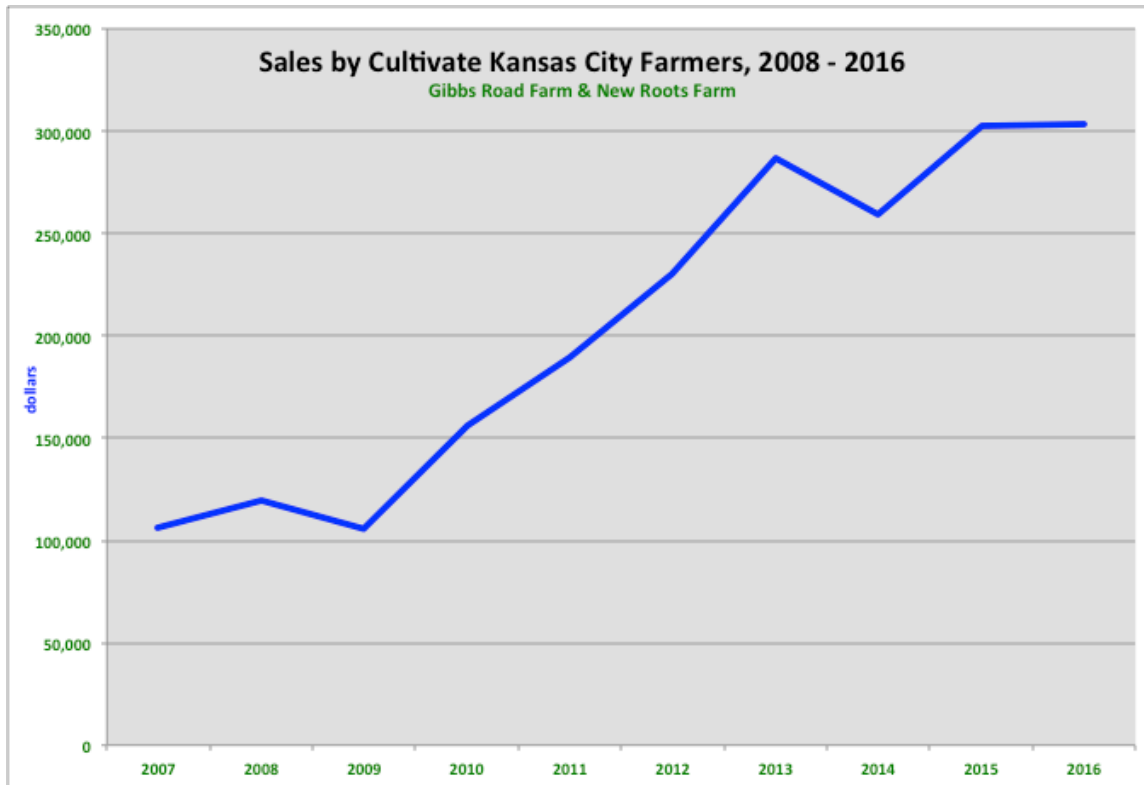
The New Roots for Refugees Farm Training Program at Juniper Gardens, a collaboration between Cultivate Kansas City and Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas, currently hosts farmers from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burma, and Bhutan. To date, Juniper Training Farm has graduated 20 farmers, 17 of whom farm commercially. The farms sell food directly to about 300 households through a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. The program has developed a "Veggie ID" resource page to help consumers make use of the items they find at market and in CSA shares. Unfortunately, the CSA shares are largely distributed outside of the urban core to more prosperous clients, to Kansas City, Missouri, or to group pick-up sites. Program leaders think that offering delivery options has proved important to increasing CSA enrollment.

Efforts to engage the community living around the training farm have not reaped the harvest leaders had hoped. A farmers' market was launched at the Juniper housing project with great enthusiasm in 2010, but was moved to the KCK Community College campus by 2014. Executive Director Katherine Kelly recalled that earlier, residents at the housing project had relatives who gardened or farmed, and so had knowledge of how to prepare fresh foods. Younger, newer residents do not have this experience, and are less likely to shop at farmers' markets or to even use fresh produce. At one point, 159 CSA families were invited to a fall festival on the farm, and only 1 showed up. Of course, the campus site also attracts more shoppers with greater expendable income.

A second farm operated by Cultivate Kansas City, located on Gibbs Road, produces 25,000 pounds of organic produce annually, with over 40 types of crops. This produce is sold directly to consumers via farmers' markets and through a 40-member CSA operation. Kelly pointed out that the future of this property is uncertain, so Cultivate is looking for a larger plot of land within the city.

The two Cultivate Kansas City farms sold \$304,000 worth of produce and CSA shares in 2016. This may seem like a relatively small amount, but it is nearly triple their 2007 sales. Moreover, it constitutes 10% of all product sales made by county farms. In 2012, the year of the most recent Census of Agriculture, Cultivate Kansas City's two farms sold 61% of all produce sold by farms in the county. However, not all of this food was sold to County residents, since Cultivate Kansas City also sells to customers in Johnson County and KCMO.

Chart 1: Produce Sales Made by Cultivate Kansas City Farms



Source: Cultivate Kansas City

Growing Food Connections (GFC), a national collaboration, conducted a study of the Wyandotte County food system in 2015 and found several barriers that make it difficult for Wyandotte County farmers to flourish. “Agriculture is also hindered by limited access to local markets,” GFC concluded, adding that, “both conventional and urban agriculture farmers” identified this as an obstacle (Raj and Raja, 2017).

GFC called for additional infrastructure to be constructed to promote local food trade. One of the recommendations was to proceed in developing a food hub that had been recommended by an earlier study (Flaccavento, *et al.*, 2014). The resulting food hub is Farm Fresh HQ, with offices in Wyandotte County, but serving the greater Kansas City region.

When Farm Fresh HQ was contacted in 2017 by this consulting team the Operations Director decided not to engage in a full interview or convene a focus group since he felt his member farmers had very little connection to Wyandotte County, and the hub had very few customers in Kansas City, Kansas.

The Growing Food Connections report further concluded that small-scale urban agriculture in Wyandotte County has significant benefits beyond its economic presence — they pointed out it contributes to alleviating food insecurity in the county, and provides a social safety net for the county’s immigrant and refugee populations” (Raj and Raja, 2017). These social benefits should

not be overlooked, as they often reduce costs the UG would otherwise have to shoulder. For further analysis of economic and other impacts of urban agriculture, see Appendix P, page 126.

Community Gardens Slowly Take Root

Many residents grow their own produce on smaller plots. Kansas City Community Gardens (KCCG) has worked extensively across the two-state metro area to foster an extraordinary urban agriculture environment and marketplace. KCCG supports 250 community partners, some with multiple gardens. These include gardens operated by institutions or organizations, such as homeless shelters; 200 school gardens; 8 community gardens, where residents can rent plots; and over 1,000 home gardens. KCCG also provides a variety of technical assistance and garden resources at low prices to low-income members.

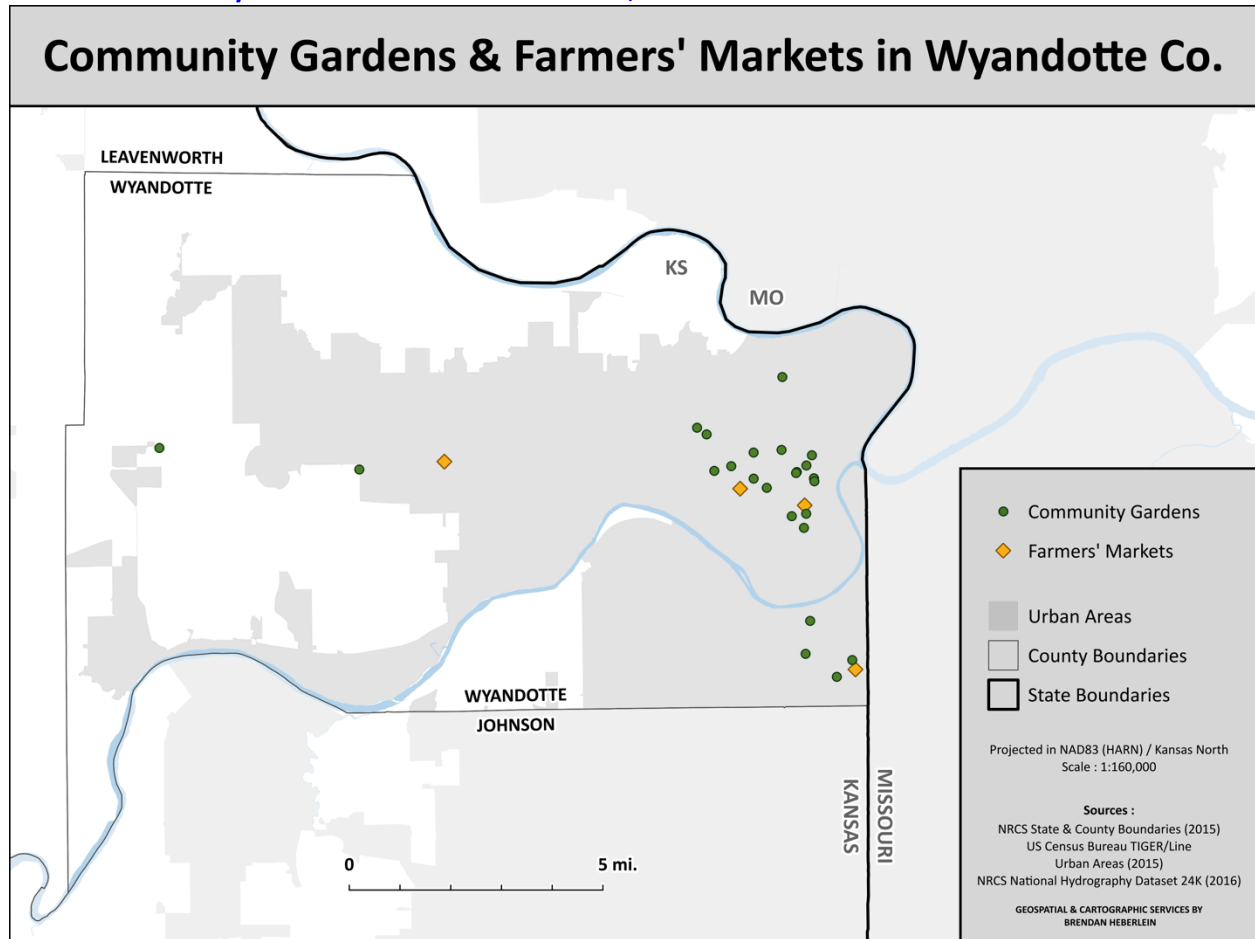
Our sources said that Kansas City, Kansas, currently has 24 community garden sites. As Map 5 shows, most of these are in the urban core. Through community partnerships, the city has also developed 14 “Giving Grove” orchards where nearby residents are encouraged to freely harvest fruit for themselves.⁸ One focus group emphasized that they would like to see a much more intensive effort to foster more community gardens because the essential skills people pick up help them make better food choices, and hold a stronger sense of self-determination. Another attendee wistfully described his two-year stint of gardening, saying that he harvested so much food that he and his wife didn’t have to go to the store for anything. His wife worked diligently to put food up, and they shared with neighbors. Yet this was not to last. Since then, the gentleman has had back surgery and is no longer gardening at all.

At the same time, if urban farms are focusing on selling to more prosperous customers, and food hub infrastructure is overlooking KCK, then it would seem that growing food directly in low-income neighborhoods may be one of the few ways to ensure that residents who are food insecure learn how fresh, local produce is grown.

Another path through which low-income residents procure access to fresh produce is through charity services. A gleaning project, After the Harvest, captures produce that has not been sold and diverts it to low-income residents. Harvesters food bank provides some produce to low-income residents, and supports an emerging effort to deliver food directly to low-income neighborhoods through a mobile market (See page 48 below). In three cases, we learned that farmers themselves were giving produce away so low-income residents could eat.

⁸ Farmers’ markets, community gardens, and Giving Groves are outlined in Appendix G.

MAP 5: Community Gardens and Farmers' Markets, 2017



Source: Kleinmann 2017

On the western outskirts of the county, a family orchard is also incubating growers and food businesses. Jeff and Joan Shearer purchased the 38-acre property that is now Cider Hill Orchard in the spring of 2011. After successful careers in the business world, both decided to take this opportunity to work together to create a community gathering place.

In addition to selling apples, fruits, berries, and other perennial crops, both u-pick and picked, Cider Hill Orchard sells a variety of fall treats (cider, pies, and donuts, etc.). They offer smoked barbeque dinners on weekends, and make the farm house and party barn available for rent for special events. Joan also uses the space to assist others who are launching businesses and initiatives. At this time, she is incubating a landscaping and a catering business.

The couple has donated food to After the Harvest ever since they opened. In their first year, 28,000 pounds of apples were harvested by volunteers and donated. Since then they've added a variety of fruit and vegetable commercial crops to their donation list, and provided land for a community garden. This community garden is maintained by volunteer groups from a nearby church in order to grow food for local assistance organizations. However, they hope to use this community garden as a foundation for empowering people to grow their own gardens. These gardening and giving efforts were largely inspired by the lack of quality food available at retail

outlets — as one staffer said, “Products east of 78th are pretty bad, bottom of the barrel. This communicates to residents that they’re less valuable... growing food is a tangible way to help people.”

Similarly, Joe Jennings, a long-time resident and farmer, gives considerable food away. For years he ran a successful CSA, with 100 shareholders. In recent years his membership dropped to 2 shares. Now he continues to grow for himself, filling two freezers to get through the year, and giving the rest away. In 2016, he told us, he donated 7,000 pounds of fresh peaches to gleaners.

Food Industry Clusters

Wyandotte County is blessed with a substantial cluster of food-related firms. While data are not totally complete due to efforts to protect confidentiality, as well as the fact that industry categories often make it difficult to know which firms trade food products, federal data show that there are 435 food-related firms in the county, hiring more than 12,093 employees, who earned more than \$491 million in 2015. This amounts to about 14% of all firms in the county, 17% of the employees, and 15% of payroll.

Obviously, the presence of Associated Wholesale Grocers makes grocery wholesaling an important part of the county food economy. This sector hires 2,100 workers at a payroll of \$140 million. Food manufacturing is also an important sector, hiring 1,870 workers who are paid \$100 million. Dining establishments, fertilizer and pesticide manufacturing, farm equipment manufacturing, and grocery stores are the next largest sectors, as outlined in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4: FOOD-RELATED INDUSTRIAL SECTORS IN WYANDOTTE COUNTY, 2015

Industry Code	Industry	Number of Establishments	Number of Employees	Payroll \$1,000s
311	Food Manufacturing	32	1,870	110,560
312	Beverage & Tobacco Manufacturing	1	(D)	(D)
325	Fertilizer & Pesticide Manufacturing	15	1,001	70,768
333	Farm Equipment Manufacturing	21	762	47,257
4244	Grocery & Related Wholesale	21	2,100	140,523
4245	Farm Product Raw Material	7	104	5,290
4248	Beer, Wine, & Alcohol	1	(D)	(D)
42491	Farm Supplies, Wholesale	2	(D)	(D)
445	Food & Beverage Stores	90	1,225	27,641
49312	Refrigerated Warehousing	3	241	9,808
722	Food Services & Drinking	242	4,790	79,573
	Totals (incomplete)	435	12,093	491,420

Source: Federal Census, County Business Patterns 2015. (D) signifies that data were withheld in an effort to protect confidentiality.

When considering its competitiveness with other counties across the U.S., Wyandotte County has significant strengths and weaknesses. Due to the presence of Associated Wholesale Grocers, Wyandotte County has a strong “General line grocery merchant wholesalers” business cluster when compared to national averages (Table 5, highlighted in Green). Other stronger-than-average food industry employment clusters are specialty food stores, liquor stores, and other direct selling establishments (See Table 6 below for number of jobs and average salary in each sector).

Weaker-than-national-average clusters include supermarkets and other grocery stores, convenience stores, and other grocery wholesalers (highlighted in red). This suggests that the county has no inherent competitive advantage in sourcing a grocery store, and would have to rely upon building close loyalties among residents if such a grocery were to flourish. Other food sector industries, such as meat markets and bakeries, were either too small or nonexistent to calculate and/or report due to disclosure agreements.

In comparison, Johnson County has a stronger-than-national-average employment cluster in general line grocery wholesalers (1.19; possibly showing workers at AWG); supermarkets and other grocery stores (1.01); specialty food stores (2.25); beer, wine, and liquor stores (1.57).

TABLE 5: FOOD INDUSTRY LOCATION QUOTIENTS BY NAICS⁹

	Wyandotte County, Kansas
NAICS 311811 Retail bakeries	ND ¹⁰
NAICS 311812 Commercial bakeries	ND
NAICS 424410 General line grocery merchant wholesalers	2.15
NAICS 424420 Packaged frozen food merchant wholesalers	NC
NAICS 424430 Dairy product merchant wholesalers	ND
NAICS 424450 Confectionery merchant wholesalers	ND
NAICS 424490 Other grocery product merchant wholesalers	0.33
NAICS 424810 Beer and ale merchant wholesalers	ND
NAICS 445110 Supermarkets and other grocery stores	0.56
NAICS 445120 Convenience stores	0.66
NAICS 445210 Meat markets	ND
NAICS 445220 Fish and seafood markets	NC
NAICS 445230 Fruit and vegetable markets	NC
NAICS 445291 Baked goods stores	ND
NAICS 445292 Confectionery and nut stores	ND
NAICS 445299 All other specialty food stores	1.24
NAICS 445310 Beer, wine, and liquor stores	1.56
NAICS 446191 Food, health, supplement stores	ND
NAICS 453991 Tobacco stores	ND
NAICS 454210 Vending machine operators	ND
NAICS 454390 Other direct selling establishments	1.52
NAICS 722330 Mobile food services	ND

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Location Quotient data, 2016. See footnotes below.

⁹ Location Quotient: Ratio of industry specific employment in the defined area to total employment in the defined area divided by the ratio of national industry specific employment to national total employment. Industries highlighted in green indicate an “employment cluster”, meaning that greater-than-average employment is average in that sector. Industries highlighted in red signify less-than-average employment. A value of 1.0 is average.

¹⁰ **ND:** Not Disclosable.



TABLE 6: SALARIES IN WYANDOTTE COUNTY INDUSTRIES FAVORED BY LOCATION QUOTIENT

Industry	Jobs	Ave. Pay
NAICS 424410 General line grocery merchant wholesalers	338	\$64,811
NAICS 445299 All other specialty food stores	60	\$50,095
NAICS 445310 Beer, wine, and liquor stores	151	\$23,765
NAICS 454390 Other direct selling establishments	45	\$32,785

Source: Economic Modeling Systems Incorporated. Data for Wyandotte County. 2017.3 – QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed.

Consumer Expenditures, Market Demand, and Sales Tax

Wyandotte County consumers spend an estimated \$476 million purchasing food each year. This is broken out in categories in Table 7. Regrettably, as we have seen, most all of this food is sourced outside the county. County residents spend at least \$450 million (conservatively estimated) each year buying food sourced outside the region.¹¹

This spending represents both a community asset and a liability. At the current time, this contributes to a weakened county economy by siphoning money to other regions of the U.S. and globally. Yet it simultaneously represents a significant market for food that Wyandotte County farmers and food processors could strive to reach.

Urban Kansas City residents seem to be loyal to buying food in Kansas. Members of our urban focus groups stated that they shop at 15 different grocers, all located in Kansas, with occasional trips to City Market on the Missouri side. Shoppers we spoke to noted that they feel welcomed at City Market on the Missouri side of the river, saying “Everyone goes to City Market, they treat me like person, like any other tourist.” But many often feel it is too far to travel to get there, and rely on neighborhood markets instead. One person said “It is my dream to have a place like City Market here [on the Kansas side] on one of the empty lots [in KCK].”

A couple of individuals from Rosedale indicated they left Kansas City, Kansas to shop at nearby stores in Johnson County, where supermarkets offer a wide array of food selections. On the other hand, UG and nonprofit leaders we spoke with primarily said that they shop at the Hy-Vee in Johnson County. One city official, in particular, said, “I don’t understand what the big deal [about getting food access] is. I mean, I just get in my car and drive to the Hy-Vee.” Some also seek out the specialty and natural food grocers in Johnson County.

¹¹ This estimate was made by Meter using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Expenditure Survey and population data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis. This was not based on specific sampling in the Kansas City / Wyandotte region, but rather draws upon average household consumption for the Midwestern states, applied to the county population. It may overstate actual consumption in low-income neighborhoods of Kansas City, although it should be a fair representation of middle and upper-income areas and for the county as a whole.

Table 7: Wyandotte County Household Food Expenditures, 2015

	\$ millions
All Food	476
Food at home	282
Food away from home	194
Food to eat at home	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	62
Fruits and vegetables	51
Cereals and bakery products	37
Dairy products	31
Other food at home	100
Meats, Poultry, Fish, and Eggs Total	62
Beef	19
Pork	13
Poultry	11
Fish and seafood	7
Eggs	4
Other meats	9
Fruits and Vegetables Total	51
Fresh fruits	19
Fresh vegetables	16
Processed fruits	7
Processed vegetables	9
Cereal and Bakery Products Total	37
Cereals and cereal products	12
Bakery products	25
Dairy Products Total	31
Fresh milk and cream	10
Other dairy products	21

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2015. Calculations made using population data from Bureau of Economic Analysis and Federal Census.

One thing to consider when evaluating consumer expenditures on food is the role of sales tax. Kansas does not exempt any purchases from sales tax, though many states exempt or reduce sales taxes on necessities such as food, clothing, and pharmaceuticals. Without these exemptions or reductions, sales taxes are considered regressive, disproportionately affecting lower income households. A lot of organizational and institutional energy is being dedicated to addressing this in the Kansas Legislature. In May 2017, the Kansas House approved a 1% sales tax reduction. Some estimate that this potential reduction could save the average family of four

one dollar each week (Chilson, 2017). While this is a priority for several local groups, no sales tax reduction on food has yet been made.

Food Insecurity, Food Assistance, and Poverty

Despite this consumer power, Wyandotte County residents also experience considerable food insecurity, as was clear from our interviews. Estimating the number of people experiencing food insecurity is difficult. One source suggests that the number of people living at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is strongly correlated with the number of people needing food assistance, while others suggest that anyone living at less than 185% of FPL is likely to experience food insecurity. Feeding America (FA), the national organization of food banks, estimates that 26,900 Wyandotte County residents are food insecure. This is 16.7% of the county population. Further, FA calculates that \$13.7 million in additional funding would be required to provide these low-income residents with donated food sufficient to meet minimum standards (Feeding America, 2016). This is likely to be a conservative estimate.

A 2014 Hunger in America Report found that 36,200 unique residents (11,200 households) of Wyandotte County rely on the Harvesters network for some food assistance. Only 64% of these households were living at or below the 100% FPL. Food assistance clients listed “underemployment” as their primary need for food assistance. At that time, 30% of network agencies reported they have to turn away clients due to a lack of food supply (Harvesters, 2015). One focus group attendee confirmed this.

Harvesters’ food assistance services in Wyandotte County are diverse. Their network extends a variety of forms of assistance to low-income residents. A partial accounting is:

- 32 pantries
- 4 kitchens with meals open to the public
- 5 on-site feeding programs that are need-based
- 8 monthly mobile distributions
- 6 The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) sites
- 3 senior mobile meal routes
- 44 backpack snack programs, including every elementary school (except 1)
- 3 kids’ cafes during the school and summer
- 2 high schools with mobile distributions

Yet, Harvesters said that Wyandotte County is nevertheless underserved. Staff see troubling signs ahead. Like all food banks across the country, Harvesters’ network of volunteers is aging. Having a bank of retirees with free time to devote to offering assistance may be a thing of the past, since benefits are getting more sparse. Within 5-10 years, they estimate, their programs will look fundamentally different because partner agencies are dying out.

It seems likely that since poverty is deepening that forms of food relief society once considered “emergency” programs have become a permanent part of the food landscape. Future programs seem likely to be built around paid staff positions and more permanent physical infrastructure. These represent the same challenges faced by community food system efforts more generally.

One of Harvesters’ priority projects is to increase participation in federal food assistance programs. Federal food assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps) and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) could be

morfully utilized. Federal data show that 32,723 county residents collected SNAP benefits in 2011, or 20% of the population. This was a substantial rise from 12,516 (8%) in 2000 (Federal Census, 2011-2015).

Yet a national audit of SNAP ranked Kansas as 46th in the U.S. for SNAP utilization rate. Only 72% of the eligible population was participating in the program in 2012, compared to a national average of 83% (Cunyngham, 2015). Wyandotte County ranked even lower, with only 69% of the eligible population receiving benefits in 2010. While this represents a significant increase from a rate of 58% in 2008, it suggests that the county could gain as much as \$18 million of new food spending by low-income residents if all eligible people were enrolled. Moreover, the impact of each of these benefit dollars multiplies through the broader economy as recipients use them for purchases. Added to current benefits of \$40 million, this would generate an annual economic impact of \$104 million.¹²

Per capita monthly SNAP benefits in Wyandotte County jumped from \$13.11 in 2008 to \$23.92 in 2010. This resulted in a 22.9% increase in SNAP redemptions per authorized store between 2008 and 2012. Clearly a relatively small benefit to individuals becomes an important subsidy to grocers as well.

WIC utilization rates are much more difficult to estimate. Over the same time period, WIC redemptions per authorized store in Wyandotte County fell by 3.0% while WIC redemptions per capita increased 0.1% (USDA-ERS, 2016). The County had the fourth-highest rate of WIC utilization in the state, at 39.7 per 1,000 residents, well above the state figure of 19.8 (Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2016).

While both are federal programs, each has distinct rules. SNAP benefits can be used across state lines but WIC benefits cannot. WIC benefits can, however, be redeemed across county lines even though they are issued by county departments.

Concerned that WIC benefits being granted to Wyandotte County residents were being redeemed in Johnson County, state and county WIC program coordinators combed over redemption data and found the opposite is true. WIC redemption rates are much higher in Wyandotte County, though specifics could not be disclosed. One theory is that the sales tax rate in Wyandotte is 7.5%, versus 7.73% in Johnson County. Even though WIC items are not taxed, this might affect store selection.

Even though there are more WIC authorized retailers and less concentration of poverty in the western half of the county, one Harvesters representative described rural food insecurity as “more intense” because the urban core has better programs, more attention, and residents are better informed. Another interviewee agreed, saying that there are pockets of rural poor that are hungry and isolated. This is where delivery assistance may be better suited.

The geographic disparity of poverty is shown in greater detail on Map 6, which displays the Census block groups by proportion of residents living below a livable wage — defined here as

¹² Every dollar of food assistance benefits generates \$1.79 in national economic impact: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/economic-linkages/>

The first set of measures focus on activities that residents can take to maintain good health. One of the key indicators of health is whether people eat enough fruit and vegetables. Experts recommend that each person eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day, if not much more, since doing so contributes to better health outcomes. As of 2015, 52% of Wyandotte County residents reported that they eat one or more servings of fruit each day, while 70% reported they eat one or more servings of vegetables per day (Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2015). While this is a rather minimal measure of adequate consumption, it shows there is a clear need for better eating across the county.

Another important step individuals can take is to exercise well. Here, too, there is room for significant progress. Only 17% of Wyandotte County adults reported they participated in sufficient physical activity each week in 2015 to meet aerobic exercise and physical strengthening recommendations (Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2015).

As of 2015, most Wyandotte County residents were above normal weight, with 76% of the population either overweight (36%) or obese (40%). (Centers for Disease Control, BRFSS 2015). Kansas City, Kansas highest-ranked city in Kansas for obesity in 2014 (Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2014). This is well above national averages.

Diabetes has become a national epidemic, growing out of a failure to eat the right foods and exercise sufficiently. By 2015, 13% of Wyandotte County residents had been diagnosed with diabetes (Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2015), the ninth-highest rate for any county in Kansas, and considerably above the state rate of 10%. (Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2015) This takes a substantial financial toll on public resources. The American Diabetes Association estimates that the medical costs for treating diabetes and related conditions in the state of Kansas are \$2 billion per year (American Diabetes Association, 2012).

Other conditions, such as cardiopulmonary disease and cancer, have also been linked to nutrition, but the causal relationships are less clear, so it is more difficult to attribute specific economic costs. Overall, one in five Wyandotte County residents reported that they felt they had fair or poor health status in 2015 (Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2015).

Nor are residents always protected when they become ill. KDHE reports that 29.9% of all adults aged 18-64 in Kansas City, Kansas carried no health insurance in 2014 (Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2014). This was the highest ranking for any city in the state, and double the national average of 14.1%.



Historical and Economic Overview of Agriculture and Food Production

Wyandotte County also is home to expansive prairies with a rich heritage of agriculture, exemplified in large part by the National Agriculture Center in Bonner Springs. Yet the character of the western end of the county has changed dramatically since World War II. In particular, considerable land that was once in farming has been dedicated to suburban development. As of 2012 there were 164 farms in the county, 14% fewer than in 2007. A total of 12,009 acres are currently farmland (Census of Agriculture, 2012), out of more than 19,000 that are zoned for agricultural use.

County farms largely supply commodities on a wholesale basis to national and global markets. They sold a combined \$3.3 million of crops and livestock in 2012 (Census of Agriculture, 2012).

Only 16 farms sold food directly to household consumers. Yet this was an interesting and complex point of growth. In 2012, USDA found there were 11 more farms selling direct than five years before, yet their combined sales of \$161,000 represented a 38.5% decrease in direct sales from 2007 sales of \$262,000 (Census of Agriculture, 2012). In our experience, the number of farms selling direct is more likely to be accurate than estimates of sales, since many farmers are reluctant to report sales to USDA, so this should be interpreted carefully.

Even at potentially reduced levels, however, direct sales amounted to 4.9% of all the sales made by farmers in the county, far greater than the national average of 0.3%. This offers substantial evidence that Wyandotte County is already a national leader in direct sales.

USDA counted 3 farms in the county that sell food direct to retail stores, and 3 farms (not necessarily different farms than those selling direct to retail) have CSA operations. One of these appears to have closed since the census was taken in 2012. A new census is being conducted in 2017.

Top products sold by Wyandotte County farms are shown in Table 8. The fourth most important product is vegetables; Wyandotte County is the 12th largest vegetable producer in the state. The majority of these sales are made by Cultivate Kansas City (see page 27 above).

Table 8: Top farm products sold by Wyandotte County Farms, 2012

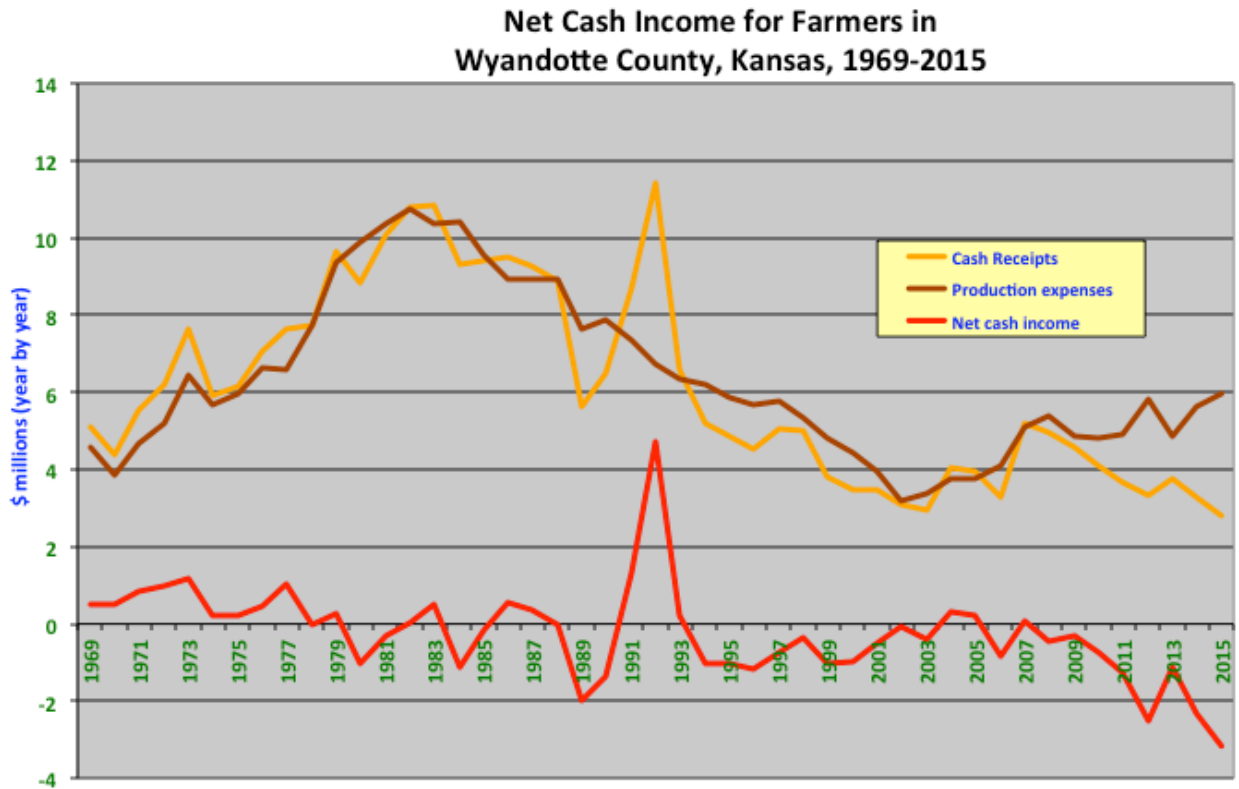
	\$ 1,000s
Soybeans	1,064
Corn	917
Cattle & Calves	561
Vegetables, Potatoes, Melons	376
Nursery & Ornamentals	178
Forage crops	90
Wheat	29

Source: Census of Agriculture, 2012

Despite this lasting heritage and deeply rooted farms, the economics of growing commodity crops have not been consistent for county growers. As Chart 2 shows, farm cash receipts topped out in 1983 at \$10.9 million, as a national farm debt crisis was brewing. The crisis appears to have encouraged farmers to leave the occupation and sell their land for development. Although sales experienced a brief second peak in 1992 of \$11.4 million, those gains eroded rapidly. Sales experienced a minor peak in 2008 at \$5.4 million, after speculators raised grain prices to artificially high levels, and have fallen steadily ever since.

In general, farm production expenses followed the same trends as cash receipts, at least until 2008, when expenses continued to rise, even though sales were falling. During this time, the number of farms in the county fell 14% (Census of Agriculture, 2012). This suggests that farmers are forced to purchase certain inputs such as machinery, fertilizers, and seed, simply to keep producing. When production expenses are subtracted from cash receipts to measure net cash income, it is clear that cash flow (red line in Chart 2 below) has been negative in all but three years since 1994.

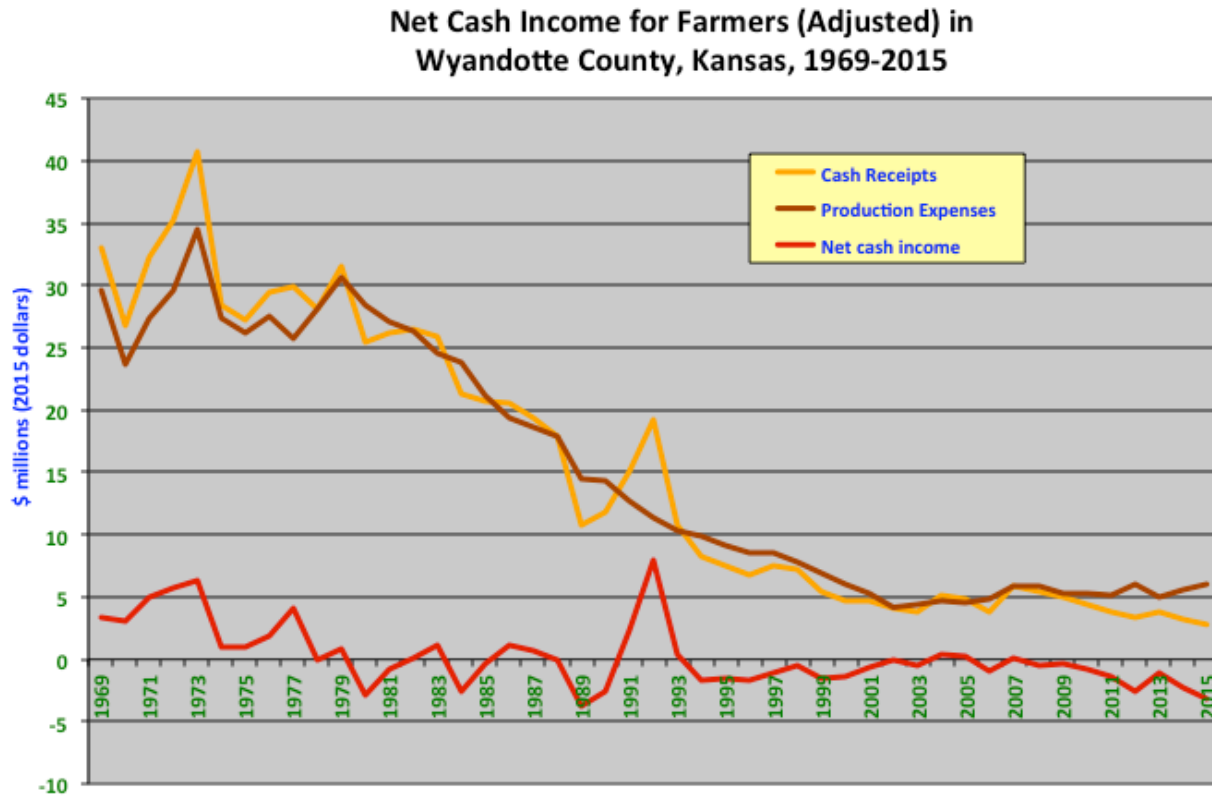
Chart 2: Net Cash Income for Wyandotte County Farmers, 1969 - 2015



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

Yet this is only one way of viewing the data. It is also important to adjust for inflation, since the value of the dollar today is one-sixth the value it held in 1969, when these charts were started. When the data are adjusted to 2015 dollars (each dollar on the chart holds the same value as a dollar today), very different patterns emerge from the same data, as Chart 3 shows.

Chart 3: Adjusted Net Cash Income for Wyandotte County Farmers, 1969 - 2015

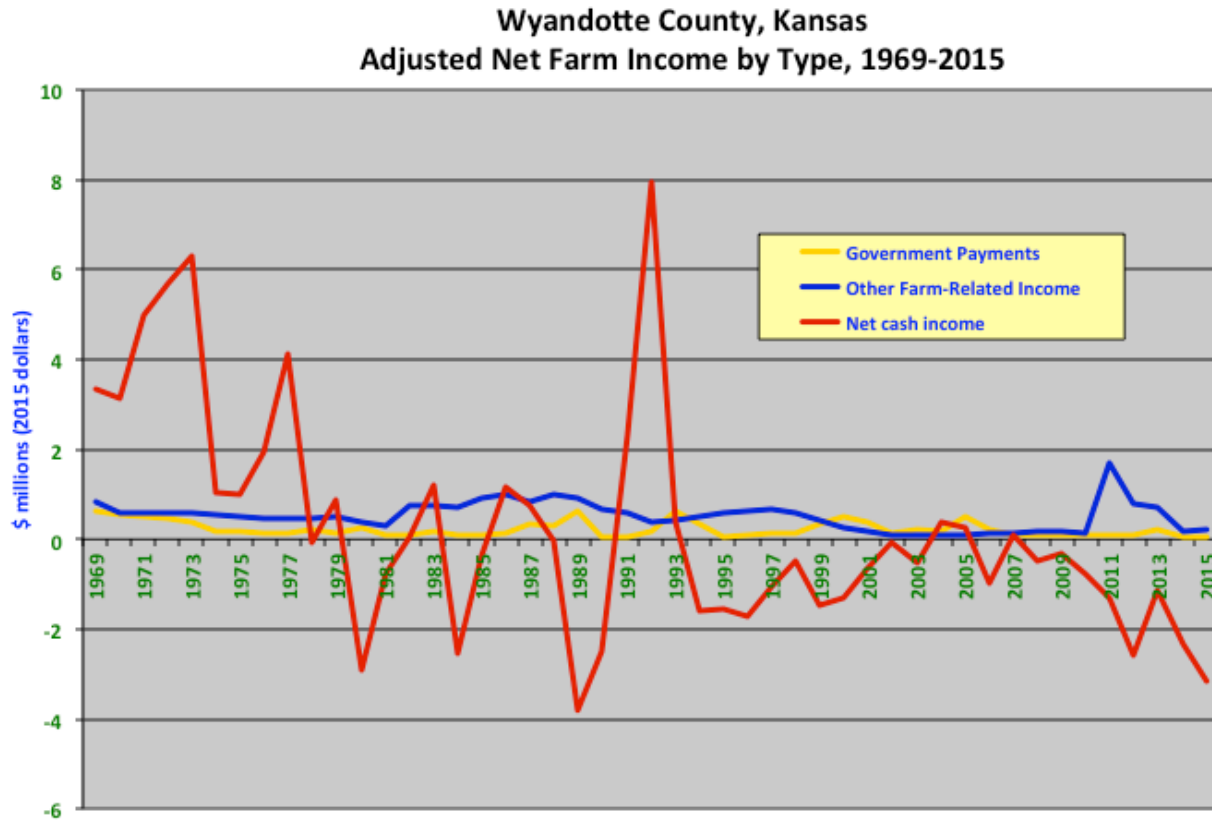


Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

Once adjusted, the data show that cash receipts actually peaked in 1973, if inflation is considered. This peak stood at \$40 million, thirteen times current sales. Cash receipts declined steadily after that year. As before, production expenses closely reflected cash receipts (a sign that farmers are price-takers, not price-makers). Yet beginning in 2007, production expenses rose steadily, from \$5.1 million to \$6.0 million (in 2015 dollars) even as sales declined from \$5.1 million to \$2.8 million (also in 2015 dollars; data in this section from Bureau of Economic Analysis). This is a 35% decline in net cash income, fuelled in part by farmers leaving the occupation, but also led by the fundamental dynamics of a global commodity economy, which often demands that farmers sell products at less than it costs to produce them.

All told, Wyandotte County farmers earned \$6.5 million less in net cash income in 2015 than they had earned in 1969. Some have sold their land for development, while those that remained doubled their farm productivity, but the economic strength of the farm sector as a whole declined. Since 1994, the most reliable way of earning net income as a farm owner has been to rent out land for someone else to farm — not by producing crops or livestock, as Chart 4, portraying adjusted net sources of income, shows.

Chart 4: Adjusted Sources of Net Farm Income for Wyandotte County Farms, 1969 - 2015

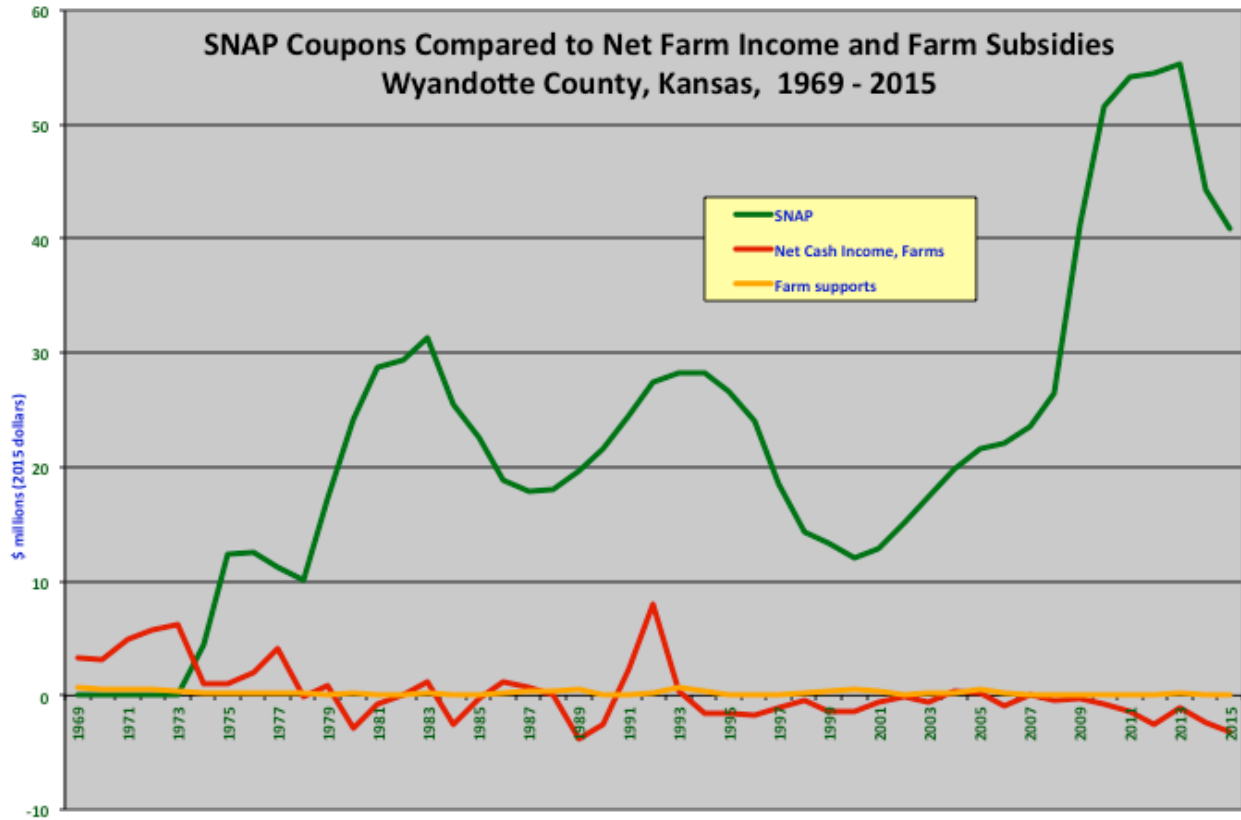


Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

In a bizarre twist, a county with a strong agricultural heritage now finds that food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) benefits have become more important in sourcing food than farming. As Chart 5 shows, SNAP benefits received by Wyandotte County residents in 2015 amounted to \$40 million — as much as farmers had earned in sales for the single year 1973. This was down from a peak of \$55 million in 2013, when the global housing finance crisis led to severe disruption for county workers. Today one of every five county residents collects SNAP benefits, while one of every 1,000 residents are farmers.

In a bizarre twist, a county with a strong agricultural heritage now finds that food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) benefits have become more important in sourcing food than farming.

Chart 5: SNAP Benefits Compared to Net Farm Income



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

Potential for Local Food Sales

If Wyandotte County were able to connect more local residents directly to local farms, impacts could be quite large. Even if each resident spent only \$5 each week buying food directly from any farm in the county, this would result in an additional \$42 million of income for those farmers. This is fourteen times current sales made by county farms.

Yet clearly the county does not have enough farms to supply this market, so any vision of building local food trade depends on making a concerted effort to (a) grow new farmers; (b) build infrastructure that creates efficient local food trade; and (c) encourage Wyandotte County consumers to make a priority of purchasing from local farms.

Agriculture in the county has little to lose by making this shift, and residents — especially low-income residents — have much to gain.



REBUILDING FOOD ACCESS AND COMMUNITY WEALTH

Time and time again, residents we spoke with named pride, dedication, and rootedness as strong community assets. They also cited the large number of local nonprofits, agencies, businesses, and other entities working strenuously to build Kansas City, Kansas. About 56 people representing 40 different entities were interviewed for this study, and we were pointed to another 40 or so potential interviewees and organizations. Some, such as the Latino Health for All Coalition (See Appendix J), pursue their own action plans and awareness campaigns. Here, we offer an overview of some of the more prominent community food efforts.

Downtown KCK Healthy Campus and Food Store

The Unified Government of Wyandotte County grasps the importance of expanding the economic future of the entire county and has taken enormous steps to develop the western side of the county through the Legends and the Speedway and surrounding area. Now that the bonds associated with that development have been paid off and property taxes are generating revenues for the county, attention is being turned to the downtown area, which hasn't seen new development in two decades.

Chief among the downtown redevelopment projects is the KCK Healthy Campus initiative, which has been designed with community health in mind. This project intends to include a state-of-the-art community center, more green space for recreation, and a healthy foods grocery store. Other features of the plan may include a permanent farmers' market pavilion, recreational fields, housing options, urban agriculture, sidewalks, and recognition of culturally relevant and historical sites.

"If I had a magic wand, I'd give them a grocery store. Please, someone, give these people a grocery store."

The guiding vision behind this initiative is to give healthy food and healthy lifestyles a prominent visible expression in the downtown core. City leaders hope that by so doing, they will help bring people together to pursue healthier living, and bring diverse cultural groups to a common ground. As one of our respondents exclaimed, "If I had a magic wand, I'd give them [KCK] a grocery store. Please, someone, give these people a grocery store."

This bold vision is not without its critics. One group of Northeast neighbors considered the proposed location for a new grocery store, at 10th and Minnesota, to be too far to travel, or outside of their cultural interest. "It is still downtown," one respondent lamented, adding that bus travel would not be efficient to that location, nor would that feel like a community gathering space.

Other community leaders mourned what they viewed as a lack of effort to engage residents in planning the proposed "Healthy Food Campus." City officials did not disagree, stating that community outreach efforts were just getting underway this summer, after the decision to locate a grocery store near a new YMCA at 10th and Minnesota had been made.

Other leaders feel that the Healthy Campus initiative, particularly the grocery component, may divert attention from efforts to support existing food stores and infrastructure. Despite these concerns, many groups have chosen to accommodate, shifting their own strategic plans in an effort to support the Mayor's agenda.

Locating this Healthy Campus project in the Downtown corridor follows a clear economic logic,¹⁴ but residents expressed deep concern that this plan may do little to address the needs and interests of the surrounding communities. One vision for the grocery store is to serve as a bridge between the black neighborhoods to the northeast and the Hispanic neighborhoods to the south and west, while pulling in more affluent and mobile residents from other areas including Missouri residents. Yet none of the residents we spoke with identified this cultural sharing as a desire or need. Instead, our respondents sought smaller initiatives expressing their unique cultural identities and neighborhood needs.¹⁵

UG officials said that as of May 2017, \$12 million of the \$16 million needed for this entire project had been raised, and many of the properties needed had been procured. As our team pursued our research, there were persistent rumors that a store operator would be selected soon yet at the time of this writing, there has been no public announcement. The development team leading this project hopes to begin construction in 2018 and open for business in 2019.

Beyond the Grocery Store

As one interviewed stakeholder commented, “No one needs another grocery store.” Rather, this person said, “[We] need to focus on transportation, cultural appropriateness, and affordability [of food].” Similarly, another stakeholder added that more grocery stores are needed, but the issue is more complicated, a “yes, and...” situation, detailing a wide variety of strategies that can increase food access while larger projects, such as grocery stores, are still in the planning stages.

Mobile Food Retail and Delivery

Meanwhile, community groups are mounting new initiatives to deliver food directly to low-income households. These efforts recognize that most of the food insecure are working, but get paid low wages. Many fill two or three jobs and still have difficulty paying for essentials. These initiatives also recognize that the grocery market for prosperous residents is simultaneously exploring direct food delivery.

Unfortunately, one such effort, The Rollin' Grocer, closed this summer after more than a year of operation. This Missouri-based initiative was launched by private investors, who, after making more than 1,000 stops in low-income areas, decided to regroup and seek additional capital. They hope to re-open this service, which delivered a simple but comprehensive set of grocery offerings to low-income neighborhoods in the two cities.

Rollin' Grocer's operators commented, “It's hard to get into those neighborhoods in the first place, and then it's hard to stay. One has to consider the long-term history and culture of the

¹⁴ Our team was unable to obtain copies of the market study that led to the determination to site the grocery store at this location.

¹⁵ To be fair, it must be pointed out that by convening groups by ethnicity, we were more likely to hear from residents who wished to express their own heritage, rather than looking for a cross-cultural experience.

neighborhood.” For each sales point they opened up, staff held community meetings and disseminated outreach materials to build awareness. Closing was not a step they took lightly, because they knew that shoppers had come to depend on them at each location. One owner explained that one of biggest challenges the firm experienced was that many residents don’t feel they deserve the quality food that was offered. Nonetheless, one low-income consumer was so grateful to have access that she prepared a meal, using only ingredients she had purchased from the mobile vendor, and brought it for the staff to eat the next time they visited.

Interestingly, residents we spoke with expressed hesitation to shop at mobile market because “they don’t have sales” (that is, don’t offer discounted prices). Our team found that while produce and meat quality in one mobile service was often high, prices were comparable to what one would find at a major supermarket. As small vendors they are not likely to have the capacity to offer sale pricing. These services would ideally appeal the most to those with very limited transportation options, but many shoppers would balk at the prices they ask.

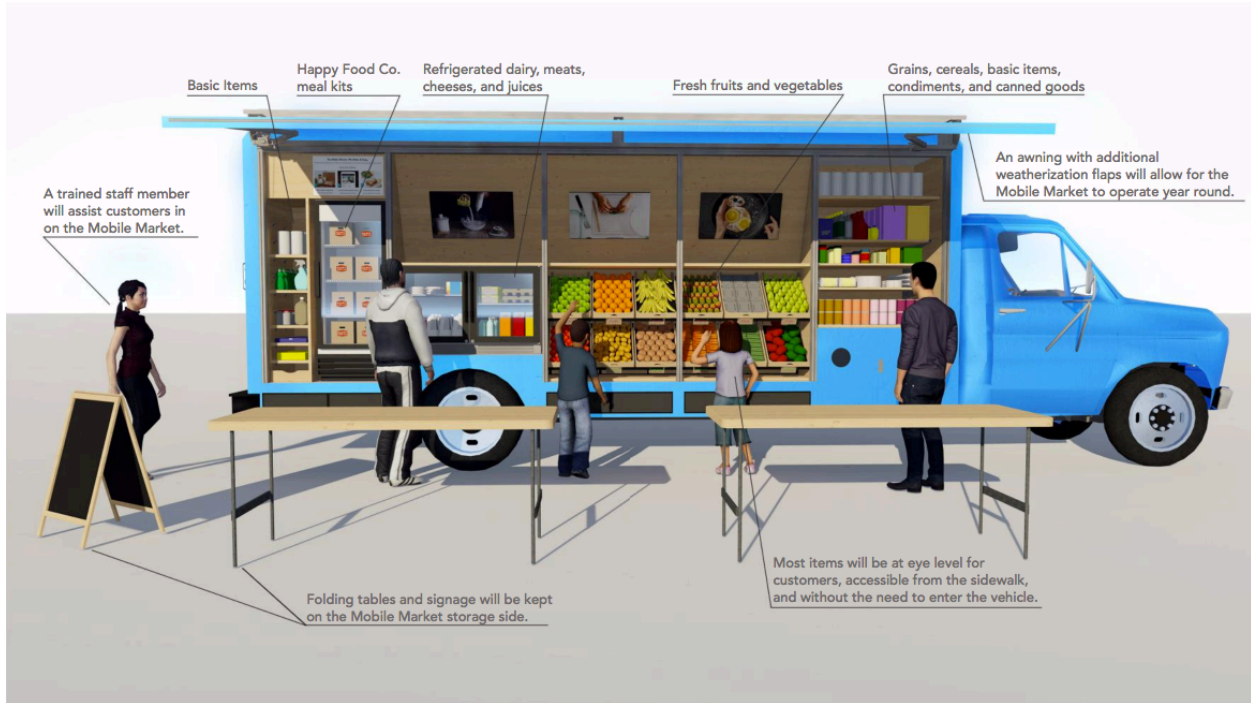
Others believe the biggest challenge is ensuring that mobile grocers stop at locations that reach the right people. We encountered considerable confusion among community members about what is allowed and what is not. For example, over the course of most of this research, consultants were told that mobile retailing was not allowed in Wyandotte County. However, when we approached the Urban Planning and Land Use office about this issue, they readily supplied a copy of a standard mobile food vending application and agreement, and described in-depth where food trucks and mobile food retail enterprises could and could not operate. The issue, it turns out, is that mobile food retail is not allowed in most residential areas, where it is actually needed most, so vendors are required to set up in commercial districts.

Civic leaders appear to resist recognizing mobile vendors. UG staff commented at a meeting between Healthy Communities Wyandotte and the Urban Planning and Land Use office that mobile food vending is “not congruent with the UG’s current vision for development” and poses a threat to brick-and-mortar businesses.

Other communities have grappled with this same issue and have successfully resolved it. Several Colorado towns have adopted more liberal food truck ordinances by responding to resident views. Minneapolis (See Appendix M) has fostered healthy food sales in corner stores and groceries, and now a lower-cost food distribution model is emerging.

At this writing, another mobile grocery initiative is underway, sponsored by the Dotte Agency in partnership with Episcopal Community Services and many other community-based partners. This effort was launched with a community engagement session held in the Northeast neighborhood that attracted 35 residents. They expressed broad support for a mobile retail option in their neighborhoods and residential housing area (Kleinmann, 2016). This desire, however, will be difficult to meet unless the mobile food vending ordinance is updated to specifically allow for residential vending.

Figure 1: Mobile Market Design



Source: Matt Kleinmann 2016

Fostering Fresh Produce Offerings at Local Grocers and Corner Stores

Cultivate Kansas City, Balls Food Stores, the Mid America Regional Council, and the national Fair Food Network are working together on a Double Up Heartland Collaborative. With a federal Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grant, these partners are piloting the first grocery-store based Double Up Food Bucks programs in the U.S. Through this pilot, consumers receive an extra dollar on their Price Chopper loyalty card when they use their SNAP benefits to purchase a dollar of locally produced fruits and vegetables, up to \$25/day. Since Ball Foods Stores is the sole retailer of goods grown and marketed by Good Natured Family Farms (a farmer collaborative based in Missouri), this program makes it possible to support locally grown food purchases in a traditional retail environment.

Before this pilot, the Double Up Food Bucks program was confined to farmers' markets. According to Diane Endicott, president of Good Natured Family Farms, produce sales rose 20-30% at stores where the program was piloted (Cantrell, 2015), but one of the two pilot stores has since closed. This collaborative hopes to expand programming to 30 farmers' markets and 50 grocery stores in the Kansas City metro area, including 20 markets and 5 stores in Kansas, by 2018, but none of these new efforts appear to be in KCK.

Expanding Urban Agriculture

Efforts are also underway to expand urban food production. One of the county's key food systems assets is the presence of Cultivate Kansas City, one of the most respected urban agricultural initiatives in the U.S. Its farms sold \$304,000 of produce in 2016 — 10% of all farm sales in Wyandotte County, after about ten years of operation, while larger, more established farms are struggling. With an accomplished training farm located near housing projects in Northeast, it could play a significant role in feeding that neighborhood. Yet currently, food

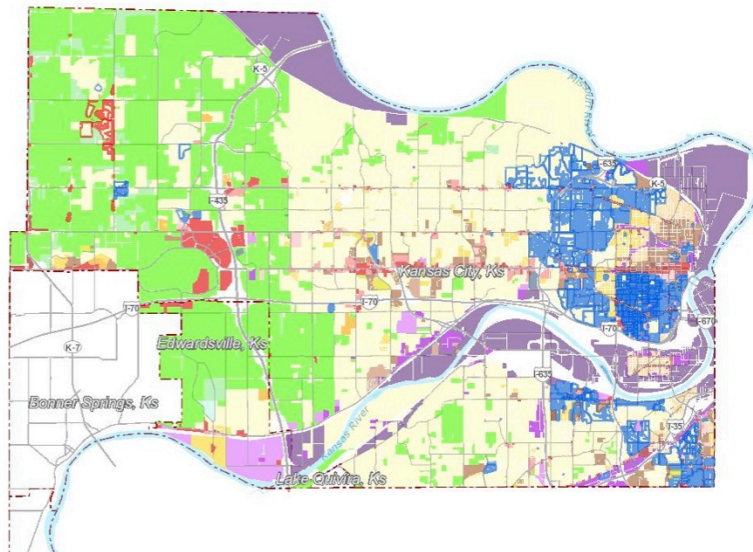
grown on KCK urban farms is largely being sold more prosperous neighborhoods, as well as in KCMO and Johnson County markets.

Cultivate Kansas City is currently looking for a larger farm so it can expand production even further. This means that Kansas City, Kansas is poised to serve as a national leader in urban agriculture and equity-based food access. This is all the more likely since the city told us it has as many as 2,500 vacant or underutilized properties in its land bank. Many could support neighborhood-based food production as a fundamental element of a redevelopment strategy.

Indeed, Growing Food Connections also found that opening up larger tracts of areas to urban farming is an important strategy for increasing food access and security (Raj and Raja, 2017). That report appears to have overstated the need for larger plots of land, since many urban farmers earn considerable income from smaller acreage. Further, small, scattered plots are well suited to provide food for nearby urban neighbors.

Whereas many urban areas across the country have issues with having sufficient land, this is not the case in Kansas City, Kansas. Wyandotte County has more than 19,000 acres of agriculturally zoned land, as Map 7 shows. Rather, impediments to further developing the urban agriculture sector are systemic in nature. For one thing, the county lacks the physical infrastructure required to efficiently convey food from urban farms to local markets, consistent with what Flaccavento (2015) found. There are a limited number of residents with the skills to farm, although there is certainly a core of immigrants with solid farming skills and a desire to learn how to better market in the KCK context. Many indeed have graduated from Cultivate Kansas City training and have, or seek, farms of their own.

Map 7: Wyandotte County Zoning Map



Source: UG Department of Urban Planning and Land Use, 2017. Light green areas are zoned agricultural, although other uses are also permitted. A total of 19,307 acres are zoned for agriculture (Fletcher, 2017).

Some city staff said they hold some interest in moving scattered parcels into agriculture, but warned that larger properties may hold too much potential development value to be protected for larger agricultural use. Other city staff members were adamant that housing and commercial development are the highest and best uses for all property, and that urban agriculture would only be a temporary use.

The Growing Food Connections study identified similar sentiments, reporting the following:

Land is reported to be assessed at a residential rate even when it is used for agriculture. The higher tax assessments affect the farmers' ability to purchase land for urban agriculture. One interviewee noted, 'If you don't have a roof on the lot you are not generating enough property taxes — and Wyandotte County needs property taxes.'

Stated differently, as the previous director of Economic Development told us, "the highest and best use of the land is housing." The director of Planning added that housing projects can include productive spaces, but "We're trying to put people back in there."

In addition to affordable access to land, access to water is also a significant barrier to increasing urban agriculture production. Cultivate Kansas City, Kansas City Community Gardens, county officials, and residents all reported that one time connection costs (\$2,500-\$9,000) could be prohibitively expensive, but that was just the start. Residential watering rates also preclude affordable commercial production.

While the community does have a great interest in gardening, it is hard work and can have a steep learning curve. Gardening efforts on the western side of the county were unaware of KCCG and their services. Residents familiar with KCCG said that they're helpful, but that more resources would be useful. The residents need access to tools and equipment at their neighborhood site. This is actually a common problem in community gardening organizations across the country. Several residents added they could grow more food if they had better access to city lots.

Increasing WIC Acceptance at Neighborhood Stores

Latino Health for All Coalition, Wyandotte County WIC Program, and the Dotte Agency are working together to increase WIC approved inventories at small stores and mercados. One of the biggest barriers to this is stocking infant formula and baby food, though other food items pose difficulties to small retailers.¹⁶ El Torito, in partnership with their own distributor Texas Valley, is leading a joint purchasing agreement with selected other stores to ensure ready and affordable access to essential items. However, since Kansas WIC benefits are changing from paper checks to E-WIC in January 2018, potential new WIC authorized retailers are waiting until then to submit applications.

¹⁶ One provided example is whole wheat bread — Kansas' WIC program requires availability of 16oz package of whole wheat bread, but most manufactures make 24oz loaves.

Planning for Food Systems and Healthy Food Access

Wyandotte County has implemented several programs and policies that effectively create access to healthy food and promote self-sufficiency. It has adopted zoning codes that deem agriculture a permitted use in residential districts, established special use permits for backyard hen keeping, classified farmers' markets as accessory uses in many districts, and launched the H2O to Grow program offering grants to support the installation of water taps to community gardens.

Mayor Holland's initiative to form a public-private partnership to build a grocery store as part of a Healthy Campus near downtown would serve as a dramatic expansion of these efforts. The UG hopes to invest as much as \$16 million (Reno, 2017) to achieve this vision, offering to pay for construction of a new grocery store that would be operated by a private firm. This store would be adjacent to other organizations and businesses that promote healthy lifestyles.

Taking such a step to invest in a cluster of firms addressing health would place Kansas City, Kansas and Wyandotte County in a position of bold leadership nationally. Yet further steps would be required to create equitable access to healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate foods for low-income residents.

One national study found few examples of such public investment. Its extensive review of community comprehensive and/or sustainability plans concluded that about only 12% of planning documents explicitly address the local food environment. Even fewer explicitly address access disparities or equity goals (Hodgson, 2012). Research by the American Planning Association found a "puzzling omission" of food related topics in planning documents, and concluded that planners are "negligent" if they don't consider their "role in removing barriers that limit people's access to healthful foods" (Raja, Born, & Russell, 2008). Within low-income communities, food leaders increasingly insist that, in line with international precedent, access to healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate foods is a basic human right — not merely a privilege afforded to those who are well off (Eide, n.d.).

Other researchers have documented that public policies have facilitated white flight and the outmigration of wealthier families (Arnold, 2007). Private investment has followed, with businesses, services, and support structures locating near neighborhoods where households were prosperous, and leaving a vacuum where lower-income residents live.

Public policies have also at times attempted to redress these trends, for example by building public housing, adding municipal transit lines, or offering welfare benefits. Yet these are discrete programs that do little to reduce the broader inequalities that outmigration has promoted. While sidewalks, parks, waterways, and transportation corridors (to name a few) are considered public goods and thus are managed through public policy, access to a basic need — food — has been left to market forces amidst a deeply unequal society. Even when food issues have been explicitly addressed — for example by fostering farmers' markets and community gardens — these have been discrete initiatives. Often they have provided benefits only to those with disposable income, leaving others relatively worse off (Gundersen, 2012).

For 40-80 years, UG policy has been deeply centered upon the assumption that promoting suburban development would increase tax base and help raise incomes for all residents. Yet that has not been the reality. In fact, income levels are more divided now. The expanded need for

civic services has often offset property tax gains, and agriculture has become marginalized even as residents became food insecure.

In a final irony for a county with a proud agricultural heritage, Wyandotte County residents of all income levels are now so widely scattered that they are asking both grocery stores and food banks to deliver food directly to their homes, stating they do not have time or transportation to shop for — or pick up free — food. Basic skills have been lost, so people at all income levels wrestle with eating well. Substantial systemic shifts will be required to redress these conditions.

This will require that the UG adopt more comprehensive initiatives. During interviews addressing the possibility of expanding food production in the county, UG leaders took the position that the literature, and our experience, suggest that such a strategy will not attain the desired outcomes (Hendrickson, 2013; see also Appendix P of this report, “Economic and Other Impacts of Urban Agriculture,” page 126). The changes that need to be made are systemic and long-term, not suited to the rapid return on investment that developers typically seek. These changes will only come about if UG officials become proactive, working with residents to frame an effective, pragmatic, and inclusive vision, and then crafting proper incentives so that developers and other investors find financial reasons to promote the civic vision.

Leaders of Healthy Communities Wyandotte have proposed that one effective way for the UG to establish a lasting commitment to food access is to amend the 2008 City Wide Master Plan. Indeed, this plan mentions food only once and only as it pertains to providing food and habitat for fish and wildlife. Yet the Plan’s stated vision (page 1) is to support healthy neighborhoods; a fundamental aspect of healthy neighborhoods is consistent access to healthy food.

One of the Plan’s intentions is “to recognize, reinforce, and enhance established neighborhood identity and sense of place.” Yet what a healthy neighborhood or community looks like is never defined or detailed in a way that accounts for food, food access, nutrition, or food production (with the exception of agriculture being an acceptable use in some areas). Moreover, since the 2008 Plan was constructed under the vision of former Mayor Joe Reardon, it hardly reflects current Mayor Mark Holland’s priorities on improving local health outcomes. Yet key UG staff said that they saw no reason to update the 2008 document.

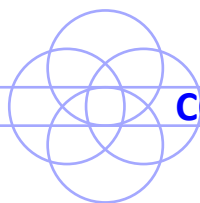
As we will detail in the next section, Consultants conclude that the UG should establish an overarching commitment to improving not only health outcomes, but ensuring equitable access to healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate foods. Taking such action will be needed to protect agriculture from expanding urban development, and also to build upon the national leadership the community has already taken in urban food production. Formalizing a long-term commitment to ensuring equitable access will also be essential to leveraging the investment the UG contemplates making in bringing a new grocery store to KCK. It would place that action in a broader context, recognizing that similar investments will be needed in existing stores that serve ethnic communities. Most importantly, it will establish the commitment that improving grocery access is only the first step among many that need to be taken to ensure that all residents are healthy.

Any systems change is long-term work; there is no quick fix for food insecurity and inequitable food access. Although no single intervention will cure food insecurity in an election cycle, policymakers and leaders can implement changes that build towards a more equitable, healthy,

and accessible food system in the future. Policy interventions are the “most promising strategies for creating population wide improvements in eating, physical activity, and obesity” (Sallis & Glanz, 2006). Codifying guiding language within visioning and governing documents is one of the hardest, though potentially most influential ways, to create a foundation for these long-term interventions and changes.

Taking this action would place the UG among national leaders.





CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Questions of food access in Wyandotte County are complex. They require civic officials to take unconventional steps to work diligently toward reforming systems that promote inequality. Making progress will require long-term commitments to achieve systems change, despite the discomfort this may entail.

Significantly, residents we spoke with do not perceive that the lack of access to grocery stores is the biggest issue they face. Most everyone involved in focus groups readily named three or more stores where they shop routinely. Each knew the strengths and weaknesses of each store quite vividly. Many mentioned that they have difficulty getting to these stores, or eating well, for a variety of reasons:

- (a) Although healthy foods are available in some stores, many are priced higher than residents choose to afford;
- (b) Although stores are easily within reach of those with access to a vehicle, many lower-income residents do not have access to a vehicle (Census data show that 10% of County residents have no access to a vehicle, with a far higher rate among renters (19%) and in low-income areas;¹⁷
- (c) Bus routes are not optimal for those who wish to travel to grocery stores from several sections of the city, notably the Northeast;
- (d) Carrying groceries by bus is not an optimal way to preserve freshness of food items, and is tiring, especially for older residents;
- (e) Many residents do not feel safe walking on city streets; and
- (f) Many low-income areas have plenty of discount stores, which are tapping solid markets, but seldom offer fresh produce or other healthier foods.

The residents we spoke with are fairly sophisticated in their approach. Each is careful to research the items that are on sale at each store, and will go to a specific store to get a good sale price if they can make their way there. All were very cognizant of the varied levels of quality, especially in fresh products, available at each store. Residents told us that stores that do not offer sales pricing will have trouble establishing a niche in their neighborhoods — and many independent smaller stores and mobile markets do not have this capacity.

Yet residents were most concerned about being marginalized. Most felt they had little access to political power to shape the public discourse, little commitment from public officials to address their needs, and limited responsiveness from food businesses.

¹⁷ Data are not precise for smaller geographic areas such as Census block groups, so more detailed analysis could not be made.

This became a broader concern over civic processes: residents told us that traditional approaches often take complex issues and break them down into simpler action steps in ways that do not address broader issues nor create systemic change.

As one respondent lamented, low-income and marginalized residents face multiple issues at once, and these cannot be resolved simply by launching a new program. “Families and households are so marginalized already. We need a whole systems approach. We can’t just chip away at one thing, it’s so layered. Is the gas and electricity on at the house? Do they have cutlery? Pots and pans? Cooking skills? It’s all present. It’s all urgent. We need to serve the whole person. We need more collaboration.” Our focus group conversations would start by discussing food access issues, but these conversations quickly evolved into conversations about neighborhood security, jobs and household income, and structural racism.

Taking a broad view, one city leader said, “There’s no one solution. Everyone is narrowly focused on their own solution — small stores, delivery, mobile markets, shared transportation. This is a classic example of addressing the symptom. The underlying disease is white flight.” Another leader sought re-population of the urban core, hoping that greater density would enhance the tax base. This suggests it is essential to find a way to ensure that those residents who have stayed in KCK thrive, as well as any new residents who may be attracted.

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Further, residents of both Latino and African-American communities mourned the lack of gathering spaces that felt welcoming and culturally empowering — places where people could gather to socialize, but also to collaborate to tackle these layered concerns. Members of the Latino community told us that the small restaurants, many of which were at grocery stores, were good gathering points, but larger spaces were also needed. One Latino felt that even Latino-owned stores are “just doing business,” and not paying concerted attention to community building.

Members of the African-American community (and others) often did not feel culturally welcome in Latino stores, or felt that Spanish signage created a language barrier that discouraged them from shopping. Blacks also sought a better community gathering point that expressed African-American sensibilities. Many ask for a store that is close to where they live, and where they will see neighbors on a daily basis. One group of residents emphasized that this store should be community-owned, preferably as a cooperative (See Appendix K, page 96).

The Unified Government has worked diligently to set a tone of inclusiveness, yet at no point did our sources (selected by local leaders in KCK) express interest in creating or engaging with a cross-cultural gathering point, the promise held out by civic officials in proposing a “Healthy Campus.” Those we interviewed tend to want to protect their own cultural identity, and see little inherent value in mixing as long as their own group feels marginalized. Importantly, the Healthy Campus was widely viewed as a facility that would tend to gentrify the city, further

marginalizing those who already live in KCK, as attention is paid to new arrivals. Several said the proposed store was too far from the neighborhoods where people live to be a convenient place to shop (in the case of many African-Americans we spoke with) or that County funds would be better spent investing in existing Latino-owned grocery stores (in the case of Latinos). Working with Latino store owners and managers to enhance facades, renew store design, and upgrade signage may improve grocers' bottom lines while also better serving communities.

Most critically, none of the residents we spoke with were fully aware of the city's plans for the Healthy Campus and organizational leaders reported they had not been contacted by UG staff to request participation. Indeed, UG officials told us that their community engagement process was still to come — after the site had been selected.

It is difficult to convey the depth of frustration we experienced when we spoke with residents and civic leaders alike. First of all, leaders of several well-placed civic organizations politely listened to us but made it clear that they did not see themselves able to occupy a strong role in affecting public policy. Residents who were less involved in civic processes also expressed deep cynicism that any productive action would be taken by public officials. As one respondent put it, "The message is 'cooperation' but the action is 'competition.' "

As outside consultants, we felt the brunt of this despair as people challenged us, asking why we were "doing yet one more study" instead of dedicating those dollars to working with residents where they live to address the complex issues involved in healthy eating and lifestyles that have already been raised in previous reports.

Even the work of local nonprofits does not always penetrate into daily life in KCK neighborhoods. Respondents noted that there is a multiplicity of groups addressing food issues, but lamented that "advocates talk to themselves, not the residents." One resident said that he had stopped going to meetings because they are "all talk, and no action."

Those residents who have become more engaged in civic processes, however, held a slightly different view. Several lamented that even when organizations are aligned in mission, vision, and action, they are not able to work in a cohesive and collaborative manner due to the sheer number of meetings on the topic. One respondent said, "We need groups to work together. It's very territorial here." One program leader expressed the concern that "there's a lot of people around the same table, expecting that it's someone else's job. Someone else is working on that [issue], but no one knows whose job it is." Finally, one pointed out that the activists themselves are not supported by those with investment resources: "We do not need another convergence of all the food systems leaders. We need business leaders to come to the table." Another respondent stated there were "not enough champions to lead. There's a leadership vacuum."

More starkly, a former Wyandotte County Commissioner, Nathaniel Barnes, related to a video crew, "You're killing my community when you spend more to tear down than you do to fix up. And that is actually happening in Quindaro right now...the City is the biggest participant in the destruction of Quindaro" (Light Bearers Entertainment, 2015).

The same video showed Mayor Mark Holland offering to dedicate attention to the neighborhood: "When I think of communities that we need to focus on, Quindaro comes to

mind immediately. There was a time when Quindaro was thriving through multiple times in its history” (Light Bearers Entertainment, 2015).

Mayor Holland has expressed similar commitment to increasing food access, and the leadership his office can play will prove instrumental in sparking systemic long-term activity. Holland recognized the importance of the city’s role when the Price Chopper at 43rd and State closed in 2016 after 30 years in business: “Urban grocery stores are hard because the free market will not build them on their own volition,” he said. “They don’t pencil [out] without a public/private partnership” (Margolies, 2016).

This is to say that what the public sector decides to invest in determines the food options that KCK residents will have. It is important to establish an inclusive civic vision for those investments by working closely with residents, directing city leaders to be supportive of resident needs, and incentivizing business leaders to participate in development inline with that vision.

Moreover, it suggests that if the UG is willing to invest \$16 million (Reno, 2017) in developing the Healthy Campus project, perhaps the UG should consider other ways it might invest the same funds in ways that more closely match the residents’ vision.

One such strategy was put forward by an African-American leader, who said that civic leaders need to “embrace what the community is already doing for itself,” investing in and amplifying those efforts.

Carlos Gomez, director of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City, also pointed out that there is interest among Latino grocery owners in fixing up their stores by renewing storefronts and improving interior facilities. One owner would like to develop a Mercado that would offer a cultural gathering place. Yet Gomez added that the absence of inclusive representation in positions of power hampers effective policy. “There is no representation of minorities in the upper levels of government [in the UG],” he said.

Another civic leader said that what is missing is a commitment to overturn systems that upheld privilege in the past. “[Current] white decision-makers aren’t part of the problem. But they are certainly not part of the solution,” this source said.

Similarly, there are structural reasons that make it difficult for the UG to act. One interviewee pointed out that the County has tended to act alone, and that the “insular nature of Wyandotte County is really challenging.” Our team noted that many people cling closely to ethnic identity, and this may create barriers in itself. As one resident told us, the breakdown of community trust plagues all involved. “When it’s ‘those people’ over there, nothing changes. But when it’s kids that go to school with your kids, then it matters. We need the ‘right people’ showing that it matters to them, that its possible, that the neediest people need to get their needs met.”

Compounding this is the broader nature of the metropolitan area, straddling two states and multiple jurisdictions. Many organizations serving the greater Metro area are headquartered in Missouri, making it more difficult for them to prioritize service in Wyandotte County. One Missouri-based organization admitted that they’re “not fully embedded in the community,” because of the state line. One Wyandotte organization official lamented that KCMO initiatives get all the grants and command most of the available funds. Others felt that the KCMO

government was more committed to investing in inner-city areas. In fact, earlier in 2017 residents of Kansas City, Missouri, approved a 1/8-cent sales tax dedicated to inner-city development (Stafford, 2017).

Business leaders reminded our team that the firms that remained in KCK as others migrated to suburban areas often are the ones that have the essential wisdom for doing business in the city. One business leader recognized that businesses and buildings often have been poorly maintained, since outmigration and disinvestment have left them short of capital for extensive rehabilitation.

Further, the decline of community cohesion, increased mobility, and limited tax base plague well-intentioned efforts to engage residents. One civic leader lamented, “It’s getting harder to reach people. We can’t target everyone with the budget we have.”

One example of the gap between the UG and its residents involves small business development grants. We asked UG officials and other business investment groups whether those grants were being used to improve existing businesses or to incentivize healthy food items. These officials expressed frustration that few completed (and competitive) applications are submitted in the first place, even after residents had attended meetings to prepare for making such applications. When this was brought up at a community meeting, one resident was dismissive: “The City doesn’t give grants to black people.” Communications gaps like this, whether based on fact or not, certainly diminish the opportunities for positive collaboration. The interim UG Economic Development director expressed a strong interest in bringing small business development opportunities to the “ground floor” and facilitating reinvestment strategies hand-in-hand with business owners to ensure follow-through by both.

Such openness stands at the heart of our recommendations. National experts we spoke with pointed especially to the experience of the City of Minneapolis, which as profiled in this report (See page 101), adopted an ordinance requiring grocery stores that wish to accept SNAP benefits to carry staple food items that could be used to prepare food at home.

Minneapolis’ systemic approach may have relevance to KCK as it attempts to improve access to healthy foods. As our profile pointed out, this approach has enjoyed mixed success, yet it has improved staple foods offerings, especially in corner stores. Yet city staff told us that the true victory was not simply that an ordinance was passed, it was that a complex array of strategies have been pursued in concert with each other in an effort to promote systems change. With the city invested in this long-term purpose, it was able to respond to residents’ needs in a more flexible manner, evaluate each effort honestly, and refine the program over time. It was the city’s commitment to improving lives that was more persuasive than the results of specific programs. Clearly, such a climate has fostered an environment where an enterprise may profit while remaining responsive to the concerns of low-income neighborhoods.

Similarly, our team has worked with civic officials and residents of Shreveport, Louisiana, where a cluster of activities is fostering change in an inner-city setting. Medical school officials started a low-cost pharmacy to improve access to medicines, and also as a way of engaging low-income residents in conversations about how they could improve their health. These were networked with community gardening initiatives where residents could learn how to grow healthy foods, and cooking classes where residents could work together to prepare healthy meals, and training

was available to encourage physical exercise and other lifestyle shifts. A church-based nonprofit renovated a building and opened a small format grocery store (Meter, 2016) (See Appendix M on page 102).

This initiative, which engages members of several races as leaders, has enjoyed discrete success, since the issues faced are immense and resources are limited. Yet it, too exemplifies the systems change approach: taking small steps to build upon the assets the community already has, rather than dwelling on its shortcomings; engaging residents actively in improving their own lives; and networking diverse initiatives into a more coordinated strategy so that residents could benefit in multiple ways at once.

Indeed, this processing of networking residents around healthy eating is precisely what fueled the strength of the community-based food sector in Douglas County, Kansas, as highlighted in our review of the Northeast Kansas food hub study (see Appendix M, page 116).

Strategic Recommendations for Building a Food System for All

White flight is certainly a primary cause of the erosion of community in Kansas City, Kansas, but other issues compounded the damage. As people dispersed across the county, prosperous residents left neighborhoods that had supported corner grocery stores within walking distance of most everyone. Primarily, lower-income shoppers remained. Most consumers headed for new stores in dispersed locations, so the stores that were most loyal to community life were the most endangered.

Further, commercial development and public transit routes often aligned with each other, so stores closest to transit stops flourished at the expense of those in neighborhoods. Private and public investors alike invested in food infrastructure — including new roadways, bus routes, warehouses, and privately held distribution routes — under the assumption that creating efficiencies in food production, distribution, and retail would lower prices for consumers. Yet these same steps simultaneously reduced margins for smaller retailers, and created new inefficiencies for shoppers.

Now consumers travel long distances, and a profitable grocery store might be closed if it compared unfavorably to others in the chain. Prices crept up over time, in part because new value-added foods offered convenience. Efficiencies that communities once enjoyed — for example, with residents having the ability to walk to a small, independently owned store that was responsive to an individual shopper, and purchased foods direct from local farms and manufacturers — became far less favored economically (Futrell, 2017).

Simply put, what was efficient for healthy community life was different than what was efficient for healthy larger farms and food businesses. Yet investment favored the efficiencies of the firm.

This unraveling of local economic infrastructure affected all Wyandotte County residents, not simply low-income. Even prosperous shoppers now find that they are too far from grocery stores, or too busy working demanding jobs, to take time to shop carefully or cook for themselves. Large-scale supermarkets are now ramping up food delivery options for those who can afford to pay for such services. Amazon.com has purchased Whole Foods, seemingly in an effort to combine their logistical network with direct food delivery.

Moreover, food has become ubiquitous. Almost every type of store now features food because it is a daily necessity. One can now buy packaged food items at gas stations, pharmacies, and office supply stores, but fresh dairy, meats, and produce are largely only available at supermarkets, at dispersed locations. Though one can now shop for groceries in the wee morning hours — something few neighborhood grocers would have attempted — shoppers are tempted to stay at home, order by internet, and opt for home delivery.

Lower-income residents make similar choices for different reasons. Residents who are stressed from working two or three jobs to make ends meet, or lacking basic food skills, or living too far from bus stops, find they do not have enough time to even pick up free food items from a food pantry. Some walk to a brand-new discount store near their homes, to pick up items that offer calories but not a balanced diet.

Thus, the Wyandotte County community fragments at all levels of income. Few, whether rich or poor, understand how food is grown, know where their food supplies come from, or track the seasonality of fresh foods. All are deeply dependent upon food grown in distant nations, and delivery systems that are owned outside the region. Few shoppers meet each other to discover their common concerns, since markets segment them. Consumers have few shopping choices that do not draw money away from their neighborhoods.

In sum, the county's legacy of public and private investment has created conditions under which residents of all incomes are separated from their food supply. Overturning this will require considerable political will in a climate that favors short-term, discrete projects suited to election cycles. It will not happen without sustained public support, since industries that are focused on reducing margins cannot invest to build strong communities (Dawson & Morales, *et al.*, 2017).

Indeed, it would seem that building community collaborations that ensure good food access for all is one of the most effective ways to build stronger social and commercial networks within Wyandotte County. This is work that need not splinter along party lines, or divide income groups from each other. It is work to which each county resident can contribute.

A. First and foremost, the **UG must assert civic leadership that is committed over the long haul to ensuring safe and healthy neighborhoods that include access to healthy foods — as well as the freedom, and connectedness, to shape public policy and to live healthy lifestyles based on community values.**

It is our belief that creating a vibrant city based on locally raised foods will be one of the most successful approaches for raising property values and fostering enhanced quality of life, at least to the extent that income inequalities are reduced.

Specifically, we suggest that the **UG Master Plan be amended to reflect this commitment and to establish long-term political will.** We propose the following revisions (proposed insertions in red font).

1. On page one: Vision for Wyandotte County, we recommend the following vision statement

Vision for Wyandotte County

To create a forward-looking, environmentally minded city that supports healthy neighborhoods and the City's rich and diverse cultural history.

To become the most-improved county for health in the state of Kansas through innovative leadership, community partnerships, strong local community networks, health promotion, and local wealth retention. (Healthy Communities Wyandotte, 2016)

As such, the Plan is intended to:

- Strengthen collaboration among residents of diverse ethnicities and capacities and build trust among key leaders of all ethnicities;
- Serve as a resource for developers, property owners, business owners and residents;
- Serve as a marketing tool for environmentally minded industries and businesses;
- Incorporate sustainable approaches to development and enhance natural areas;
- Revitalize neighborhoods;
- Ensure equitable access to food for all residents;
- Expand urban food production including use of currently vacant urban lots and the county's agricultural acreage;
- Identify a true "multi-modal" transportation network that balances the needs of motorists, transit, pedestrians and cyclists;
- Recognize, reinforce and enhance established neighborhood identity and sense of place;
- Prioritize public infrastructure investments; and
- Outline an action plan for implementation.

2. In Chapter 2—Policy Plan: After the "Healthy Future" section on page 10, we recommend the following language adapted from an American Planning Association working group:

Principles of a Healthy, Complete Neighborhood¹⁸

Healthy, complete, and resilient neighborhoods are places where all types of resident needs and business needs for work, living, gathering, recreation and health can be met within a comfortable walking distance. A healthy, complete, and resilient neighborhood is diverse, healthy, and prosperous, and includes:

- Meets the needs of people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds
- Neighborhood center
- Orientation to transit with affordable options
- Quality public schools
- Public open spaces and recreational facilities
- Civic amenities
- Walkability and bikeability
- Density
- Mixed uses
- Mixed incomes
- A variety of housing options
- Access to fertile soil, clean air and water, and spaces for community gardening and urban farming¹⁹

¹⁸ Adapted from Fiala 2015 and master planning documents from other cities.

- Equitable and affordable access to healthy foods at retail grocery stores

Although most of the rest of the 2008 Master Plan addresses the specific items detailed in the Healthy and Complete Neighborhoods definition, it does not specifically address food systems and food access.

3. In Chapter 2—Policy Plan: *As part of the Policy Plan Framework section starting on page 15, we recommend the following language, designed to parallel other sections of the 2008 Master Plan*

Healthy, Sustainable Food Systems & Food Access: A healthy, sustainable food system is an essential part of the community. Ensuring healthy, food access and securing healthy food production are vital parts of a food system.

- **Guiding Principles**
 - Support fair and just communities and conditions for all farmers, workers, and eaters.
 - All residents should have the opportunity to produce food.
 - Provide safe, convenient, equitable physical access to affordable food that is health-promoting and culturally appropriate.²⁰
- **Policies**
 - The attraction and retention of high-quality grocery stores and other healthy food purveyors should be pursued as an economic development strategy for the City. Healthy food outlets include full-service grocery stores, regularly held farmers' markets, fruit and vegetable markets, and convenience stores or corner stores that sell a significant proportion of healthy food.
 - Increase city-wide access to healthy food choices, such that every residential parcel is within walking distance of a healthy food outlet.
 - Increase the availability of healthy food choices in neighborhood stores.
 - Align public transit options with food access locations and low-access neighborhoods.
 - Ensure full utilization of federal food assistance programs.
 - Avoid concentrations of unhealthy food retailers and liquor stores.
 - Create and secure sustainable opportunities for local food production.
- **Priority Recommendations**
 - Create public incentives and tax credits for healthy food retail.
 - Designate space within residential zones for farmers' markets and mobile fresh food retail.
 - Streamline permitting processes and prioritize approval for retailers and mobile vendors to reach low-access areas.
 - Expand access to farmers' markets, including expanding the hours of the existing farmers' markets, pursuing new farmers' markets in transit-accessible

¹⁹ A parallel provision might be added calling for dispersed, neighborhood renewable energy production.

²⁰ Adapted from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (formerly American Dietetics Association), American Nurses Association, American Planning Association, and American Public Health Association. See Appendix H.

locations, supporting expanded transit service to bring residents to and from the farmers markets, and allowing farmers' markets on public property at minimal cost to the vendors.

- Support efforts to increase SNAP and WIC enrollment.
- Support efforts to increase SNAP and WIC authorized retailers.
- Require access for SNAP, WIC, and other food assistance programs at farmers' markets and independent retailers.
- Require small retailers, corner stores, convenience stores and others to provide healthy and fresh food choices and to minimize the sale of sweetened beverages and highly processed foods.
- Require menu labeling of caloric content.
- Restrict junk-food marketing, particularly around schools and community centers.
- Allow year-round food production infrastructure such as hoop houses.
- Allow for backyard livestock.
- Allow for residential sales of garden produce including mobile vending and garden stands, as well as on-site sales for home, community, school gardens, and urban farms.
- Support farm-to-school programs and school based gardening.
- Protect farmland and conduct and stimulate research to facilitate growing techniques that minimize water usage and build healthy soils accounting for regional climate change.
- Streamline processes for transferring ownership of abandoned lots to commercial food producers.
- Allow for reduced property taxes on land used for commercial food production for local consumers.
- Support long term preservation and sustainability of regional farmland as a significant source of locally grown healthy food sources that are beneficial to residents of the County. This might include development of a land trust to preserve farmland and greenspace.

Consultants also understand this commitment can be made even if not formally codified in the Master Plan. It would have more force if codified, but this is primarily a commitment that must be made by civic leaders as a matter of ethics and then executed as a matter of entrenched mission. We noticed that civic leaders appear to be waiting for a private entity to take appropriate action, when in fact it is the UG itself that must take the lead and set the tone. It must attract developers to a vision that residents have mutually established, and must invest on the front end, rather than merely reacting to private proposals.

This leadership must:

1. Commit itself to long-term initiatives that foster systemic change toward a more inclusive society.
2. Build upon the assets of the current residents of Wyandotte County, with special emphasis on low-income areas where needs are greatest.
3. Build strong social and commercial connections among diverse residents.
4. Balance the need for cultural enclaves to thrive, celebrating their unique heritages, while building great respect among people of diverse cultures.

5. Act inclusively and respectfully.
6. Maintain a high degree of transparency in its interactions with the public.
7. Work with residents to shape common values and a pragmatic vision for systemic change in Wyandotte County.
8. Engage business leaders to assist in advancing this vision.
9. Foster shared learning over the long term.
10. Embrace failure as well as success.

We especially point to the “Wyandotte County Food Economy Assessment: Resident Recommendations” put forward by a group of Northeast Kansas City, Kansas leaders (see page 96). This document highlighted the following values:

1. Collaboration
2. Self-Reliance
3. Ownership
4. Unity
5. Quality
6. Diverse Food Offerings

Through further dialogue with other communities, a common set of values can be similarly fostered encompassing more residents and civic leaders.

B. Food system leaders in Wyandotte County should **commit themselves to building a community-based food system**, not simply a “local” food system. See page 7. This food system should be centered upon efforts to grow more food within the County, with priority on urban parcels, and priority in ensuring that marginalized residents can own and operate emerging food businesses. Efforts to train new farmers must be made permanent, with economic incentives appropriate for new small to larger scale farms, as well as for farmers wishing to expand their operations. Ongoing support must be given to immigrant farmers who wish to engage in local food trade. Wherever possible, food trade should connect Wyandotte County farms with Wyandotte County residents to build stronger economic, cultural, and social networks. As the UG hires a permanent economic development director, a priority should be placed on hiring someone who is committed to building health, wealth, connection, and capacity (See Meter, 2010) among all Wyandotte County residents.

C. Persistent outreach efforts must **engage Wyandotte County residents** — at all income levels — to support community food businesses. As one example, the UG might launch a “Eat Five, Buy Five” campaign to promote healthy eating (eat five fruits and vegetables each day) while supporting local farms (buy \$5 of food a week directly from a county farm). A variation of this campaign has been adopted by the State of Alaska as part of its Alaska Grown program, receiving excellent media coverage and strong support from farm organizations (Alaska DNR, 2017, Alaska Grown, 2017).

D. Wyandotte County **food system leaders, in collaboration with the UG, and business leaders should host an annual community-based food summit**. At this day-long, structured meeting, residents will learn more about each other’s initiatives and neighborhood cultures, learn how to better support each other mutually, embrace diverse approaches, reflect on successes and challenges the movement faces, improve their practice in building community-based food

systems, and refine strategies over the long term. Holding such an annual gathering will raise the visibility both of community foods efforts and the need to eat better to attain better health outcomes. In turn, this will hopefully encourage more residents to place a priority on purchasing food from local farms and improving their nutrition practices. This summit must not conclude without short term and long term action items assigned to responsible actors.

E. Wyandotte County must **raise funds to specifically invest in community-food-system development**. This might be accomplished internally by issuing municipal bonds, or creating a special sales tax levy, or expanding allocations for small business development funds to specifically incentivize health initiatives. External sources of money, such as New Market Tax Credits, philanthropic dollars, federal and state funds, should also be raised. Public and private funds should be dedicated to ensure that local businesses are informed of and take advantage of local investment opportunities (Unified Government, 2017). Specifically, the UG and its permanent economic development director should:

1. Create 1-2 page factsheets describing local reinvestment opportunities and distribute these to businesses.
2. Ensure that grant applications and local investment policies are in multiple languages.
3. Coach business leaders if needed to ensure that diverse business owners are able to take advantage of financial opportunities.
4. Provide technical assistance, as needed, for how to spend funds, i.e. recommend signage improvements or refrigeration improvements.

F. With regard to the Healthy Campus, our team recommends that any store that may be invited to locate in conjunction with the YMCA be invited to **open up two stores** — one at the campus, and another that is located in Northeast in a smaller format. This second store might be a candidate to become a community owned cooperative, or perhaps a public/private partnership. Regardless of ownership, it should (1) feature fresh produce from KCK farms; (2) offer for sale a limited but ample selection of healthy staple foods; (3) hire neighborhood residents as a priority; (4) engage residents in learning about food growing, food preparation, healthy eating, composting, and other healthy living skills. Through its connection with the larger store at the Healthy Campus, store managers could take advantage of opportunities to purchase larger quantities at lower prices and invest in larger storage facilities. These two stores might also work with local distributors, including those owned by Latino grocers already in KCK, to source locally produced foods efficiently. Careful business planning must be accomplished to ensure that these groceries are poised for business success. Effective networking with other grocers and distributors in the area, and with the Kansas Rural Grocery Initiative, can increase the potential for success.

The second store would be located in Quindaro, and would serve as a broader community hub. Its opening would wait until the first store at Minnesota Street has established itself. This second store would be the outcome of a thoughtful and inclusive community planning process.

The store would be serve as the core of a business cluster centered around Cultivate Kansas City, J-14 Farm, Cider Hill Orchard, and other local farms, growing as this network of producers increases its ability to supply local demand. The second store might sell produce grown in community gardens nearby, and might spawn new value-added businesses. It might partner with a nonprofit that would serve as a training center where residents learn food growing, selection, preparation, and nutrition skills. The store might be aligned with a local hospital or

medical school that supports the store as part of their preventive health mission. As in Shreveport, the new store might include a subsidized pharmacy, so that residents could meet several of their health needs at one place.

This, indeed, would be a Healthy Campus, but one that grows out of a community engagement process, and one that is focused on the needs of low-income residents in Kansas City, Kansas. It would be a cluster of firms that help create and foster the unique qualities of the city and county — the established core of urban farms and rich heritage. It would be an outgrowth of the planning process in which the UG clearly takes a strong stand to respond to resident needs.

Planning and implementation would have to proceed carefully, since smaller format stores have often struggled. Considerable community support must be achieved before contemplating opening a storefront. Yet the UG's offer to assist grocery development by investing in the physical building where a grocery store is located would allow considerable latitude to a new grocery venture.

Moreover, several precedents exist. See Appendix L.

G. Local food system leaders should **build a solid leadership network** that effectively coordinates local foods activity in an inclusive manner. Some of the organizations already taking leadership in this arena that should spearhead this effort and engage more diverse stakeholders include (organizations listed alphabetically):

1. Neighborhood and ethnic leaders
2. Cultivate Kansas City
3. Healthy Communities Wyandotte
4. Heartland Black Chamber of Commerce
5. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City
6. KC Healthy Kids
7. Kansas Rural Grocery Initiative
8. Kansas State Research and Extension
9. UG Department of Health
10. UG Department of Economic Development

If this network works effectively, it will be able to coordinate community foods activity across the county by framing common strategic plans, responding flexibly to changing circumstances, and communicating openly to refine implementation activities over time. Building strong trust among community members of all backgrounds and capacities will be key to building lasting community strength.

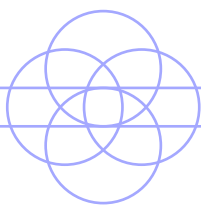
H. Wyandotte County food system leaders, in collaboration with the UG, should **coordinate with Greater Kansas City efforts to brand foods that are grown in the region**. As one example, the UG might wish to launch “Best in Wyandotte” awards that showcase community health and wealth practitioners. More on branding is mentioned in the Northeast Kansas Food Hub Feasibility Study (Flaccavento, *et al.*, 2014).

I. **Revise the Mobile Vending ordinance** to specifically allow for mobile food retail in residentially zoned areas. Additional policy actions are outlined in Appendix I.



J. Maximize Use of Federal Food Assistance Programs. In particular, foster SNAP (Supplemental Assistance Nutrition Program, formerly called food stamps) enrollment so that all those eligible receive benefits. While these benefits are a stopgap measure, they are an important safety net. SNAP brought \$41 million into the Wyandotte County economy in 2015, directly benefitting low-income residents, farmers, and grocers. This program already involves a significant part of the county population: 20% of county residents currently receive food stamps. Additional benefits are extended to seniors through the Seniors Farmers Market Coupons, and use of these should also be maximized.

Our recommendations might be summed up as follows: Wyandotte County needs to have the political will to operate in a proactive manner to achieve a long-term vision. If the political will doesn't exist, it needs to be created.



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Appendix A: Focus Group Framework

Topics/Questions for Consumers

- Tell us about food/grocery stores in your community? How do you feel about the choices you have?
- How are you currently getting foods for your family?
- Why? What influences those decisions?
- How do you WANT to get foods for your family? Why?
- What is preventing you from getting the foods you want? What is getting in your way?

Follow up

- Do you want a store in your community? What does it look like? Where would it be?
- Tell us what would making getting to the stores that you want to shop at easier?
- What is the best way to tell you and your family about new opportunities? i.e. the Healthy Campus project? Or new transportation options?

Topics/Questions for Retailers

- Tell us about your business vision/mission
- What would you like to improve?
- What do you need to accomplish that?
- Tell us about your customers? Who is your average customer? What kind of products are they looking for? What kind of products are you looking for that you can't get?

Appendix B: Timeline of City Annexation

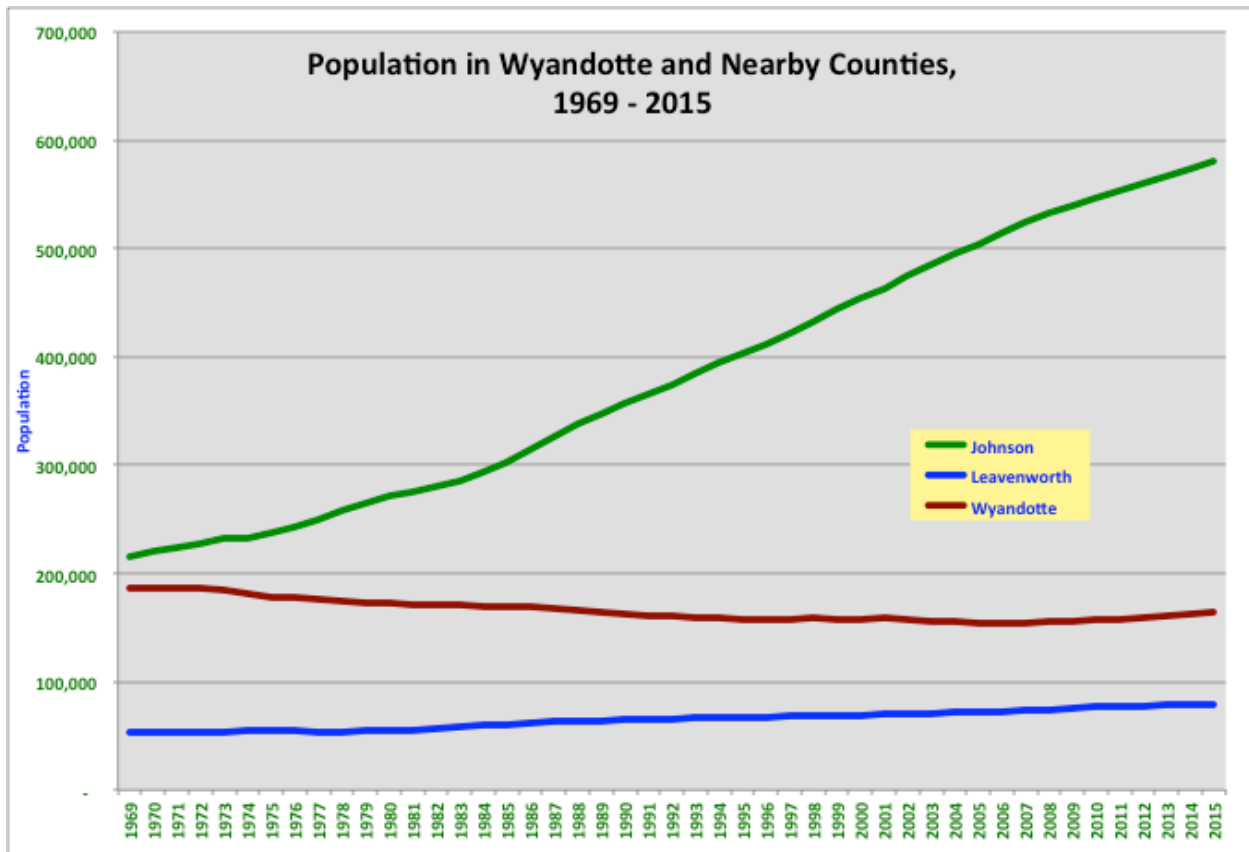
- 1859- Wyandotte and Quindaro are incorporated as separate cities
- 1862- Quindaro's incorporation is repealed
- 1868- Kansas City, Kansas Town Company formed
- 1881- Riverview annexed into now Wyandotte
- 1881- Armstrong annexed into Wyandotte
- 1886- Armourdale, Wyandotte, and Kansas City consolidate into one city
- 1892- 172 acres of Union Pacific rail yard annexed into Kansas City
- 1909- Argentine consolidated into Kansas City, Rosedale invited to consolidate
- 1922- Rosedale became part of Kansas City
- 1963- Fairfax annexed
- 1971- "Annexation War" between Kansas City and Bonner Springs
- 1972- Another 172 square acres of unincorporated land awarded to Kansas City
- 1991- Piper annexed
- 1997- Unified Government formed, comprising all of Wyandotte County, except Bonner Springs and Edwardsville?

(Armstrong, *et al.*, n.d.)

Appendix C: Socioeconomic Profile of Wyandotte County

Population in Wyandotte County declined 13% from 1969 to 2015, and as noted above bottomed out in 2006. This is shown on Chart 6, which also shows how population change compares with the two nearest neighboring counties, which have grown consistently.

Chart 6: Population in Wyandotte and Nearby Counties, 1969 - 2015



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

Wyandotte County is diverse, with Whites making up over half of the population, and with strong Latino and Black communities. Table 9 below shows the racial composition of the county population, reporting those who identified primarily with one racial group.

Table 9: Wyandotte County Population by Race

Ethnicity/Race	Population	Percent
White	99,235	61.7%
Black	39,044	24.3%
American Indian	654	0.4%
Asian-Pacific	5,553	3.5%
Hispanic	43,668	27.2%

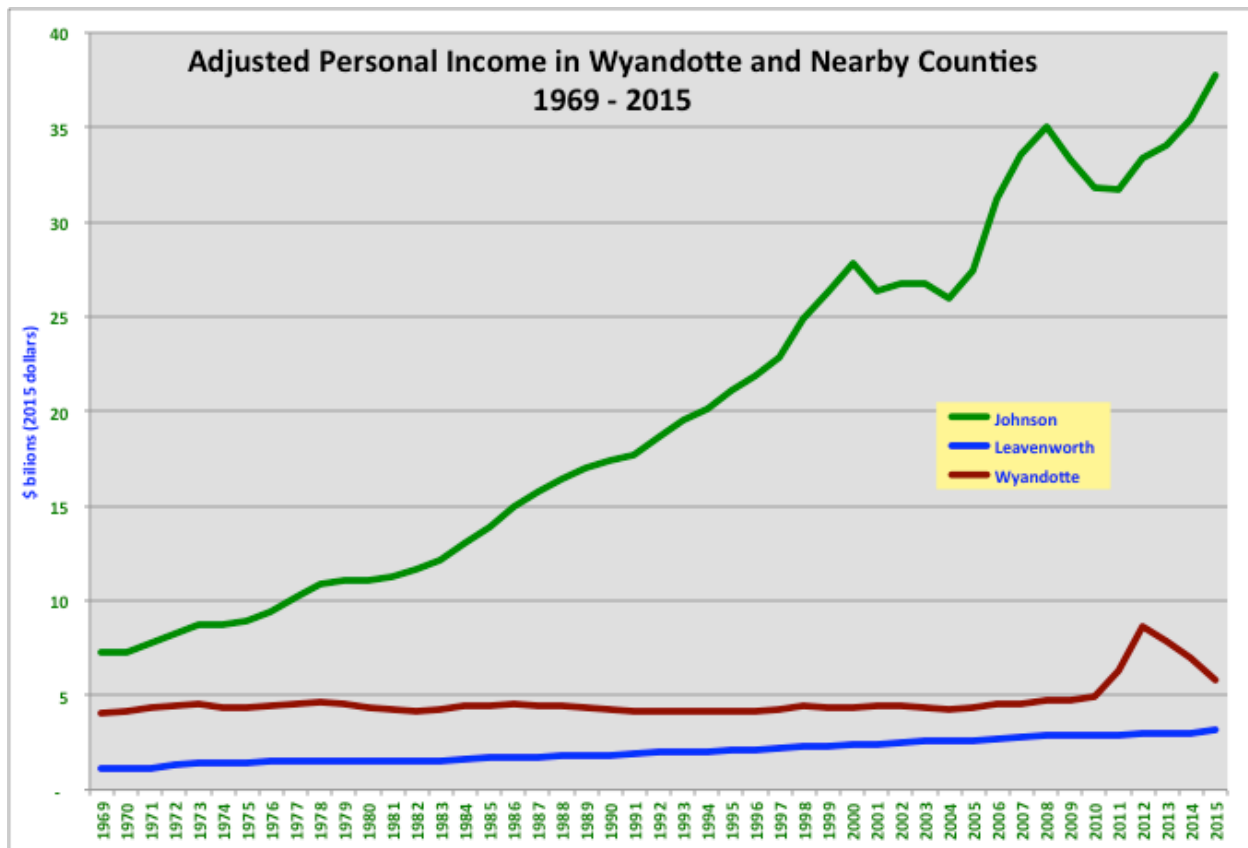
Source: Federal Census, 5-year average estimates for the years 2011-2015. Note: the population counts listed above do not total 100% because many Hispanics (a culture) are also counted as members of one or more of the racial groups listed above. The population counted in this census was 160,806, lower than the 163,831 figure cited above (Bureau of Economic Analysis).

The Census further shows that 87% of Latinos who live in Wyandotte County are Mexican in origin. Of the Asian-American population, 1,511 are Burmese, often members of a Karen population that have been forced to leave their homelands during political turmoil there. The Census also tallied 823 residents with Cherokee heritage.

Bureau of Economic Analysis data show that residents earned \$5.8 billion of income in 2015. As Chart 7 shows, this is a steep decline from a peak of \$8.6 billion in 2012. This is the result of a temporary rise in income for manufacturing workers.

The chart also shows that while personal income in Wyandotte County increased 44% from 1969 to 2015 (after adjusting for inflation, and despite a declining population), this did not keep pace with nearby Johnson County (422% increase, related to a 170% population growth), or Leavenworth County (180% increase, with a 49% population growth).

Chart 7: Adjusted Personal Income in Wyandotte and Nearby Counties, 1969 - 2015

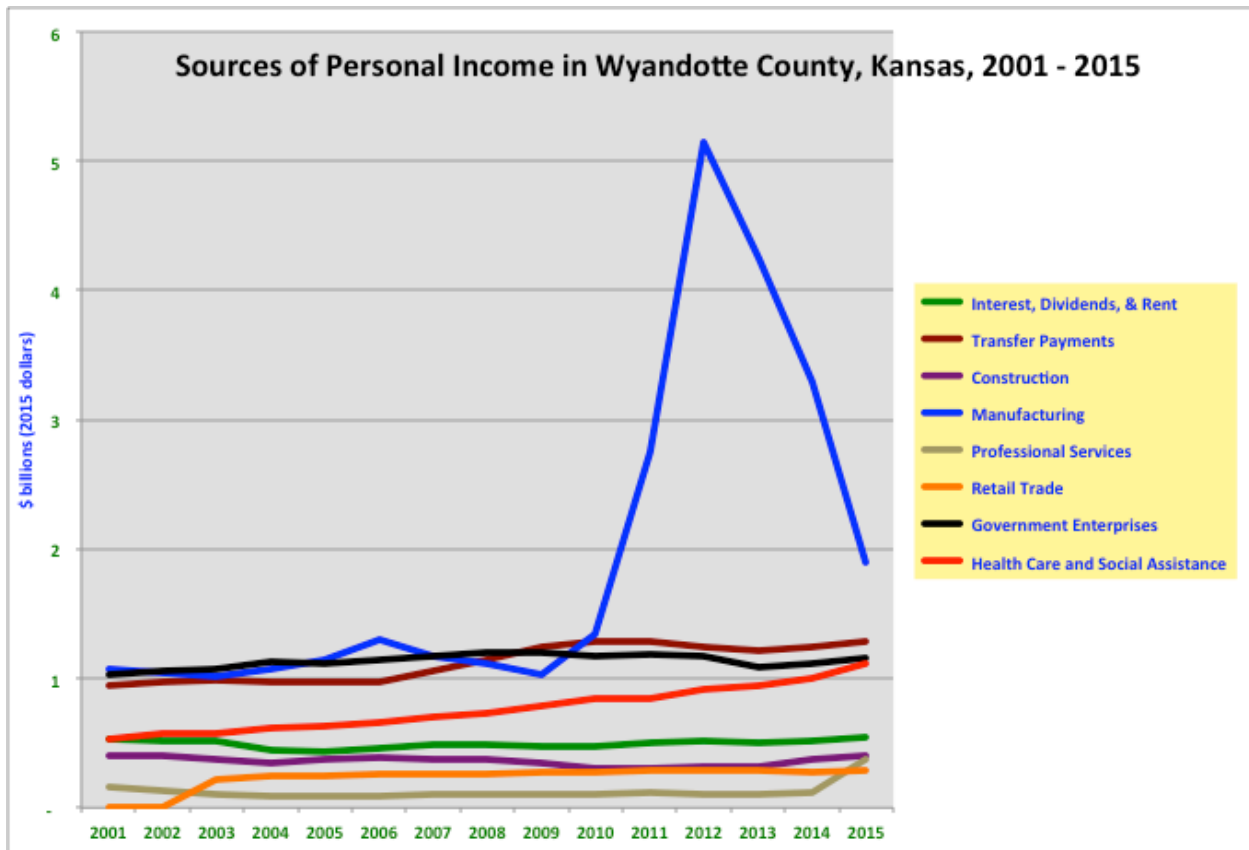


Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

The next chart, Chart 8, shows that manufacturing is the backbone of the Wyandotte County economy, with 33% of all personal income earned in manufacturing jobs. Yet public programs account for even more income, with 42% of all income earned either through transfer payments (public benefits such as unemployment and retirement benefits, totaling \$1.3 billion or 22%) or government jobs (\$1.2 billion or 20%). Health care workers rank as the fourth largest earners, with \$1.1 billion (19%) of personal income, while transportation workers earned \$721 million (12%).

Note, too, that manufacturing income rose dramatically in 2010, only to fall off a few years later. This bubble appears to be related to a temporary increase in petroleum and coal product manufacturing, with related but smaller expansion of chemical manufacturing. The chart below also suggests that construction workers living in Wyandotte County did not benefit in unusual ways from the development of the Village West complex on the west side of the county.

Chart 8: Sources of Personal Income in Wyandotte County, 2001 - 2015



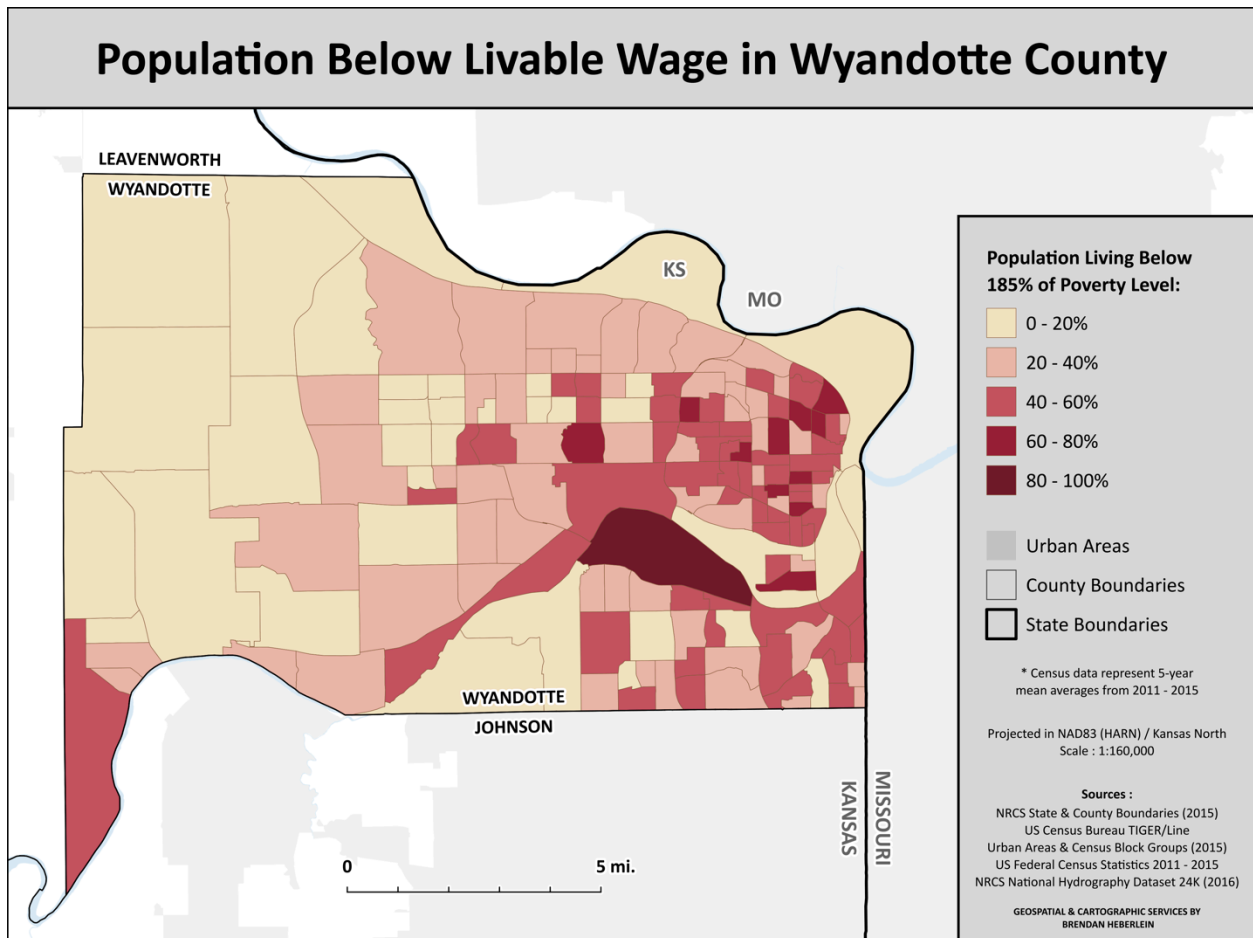
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

While census data regarding income by race do not correspond well to BEA data regarding personal income, they do show that each racial group earns income roughly in proportion to their population. Hispanics may be earning less than their share of the population would

indicate. And, while wealth data is not publicly reported, it is clear from observing the community and reading historical accounts that Whites hold more wealth passed down from earlier generations than other racial groups hold. One farmer noted proudly that several of his neighbors had earned millions in wealth by selling farmland for development as Wyandotte County expanded after World War II.

So the inequalities present in Wyandotte County may well have more to do with historical inequality than raw lack of financial opportunity today. This shows up in the geographical distribution of poverty. Map 8 below shows the regions where poverty (defined here as living at an income less than 185% of the federal poverty level) is most concentrated: primarily those areas where marginalized communities live. Where the agricultural land base is strong, there is less poverty. Some industrial areas also foster poverty, despite the presence of jobs. In one region near the Kansas River, 80% of the population lives below the 185% of poverty line, while in several areas 60% - 80% of the population earns less than a livable wage. All told, 35% (55,724) of the county population lives below a livable wage level. This certainly poses immense challenges given the rising incomes and expanding population base in nearby counties; Wyandotte County finds itself in a difficult competitive market environment.

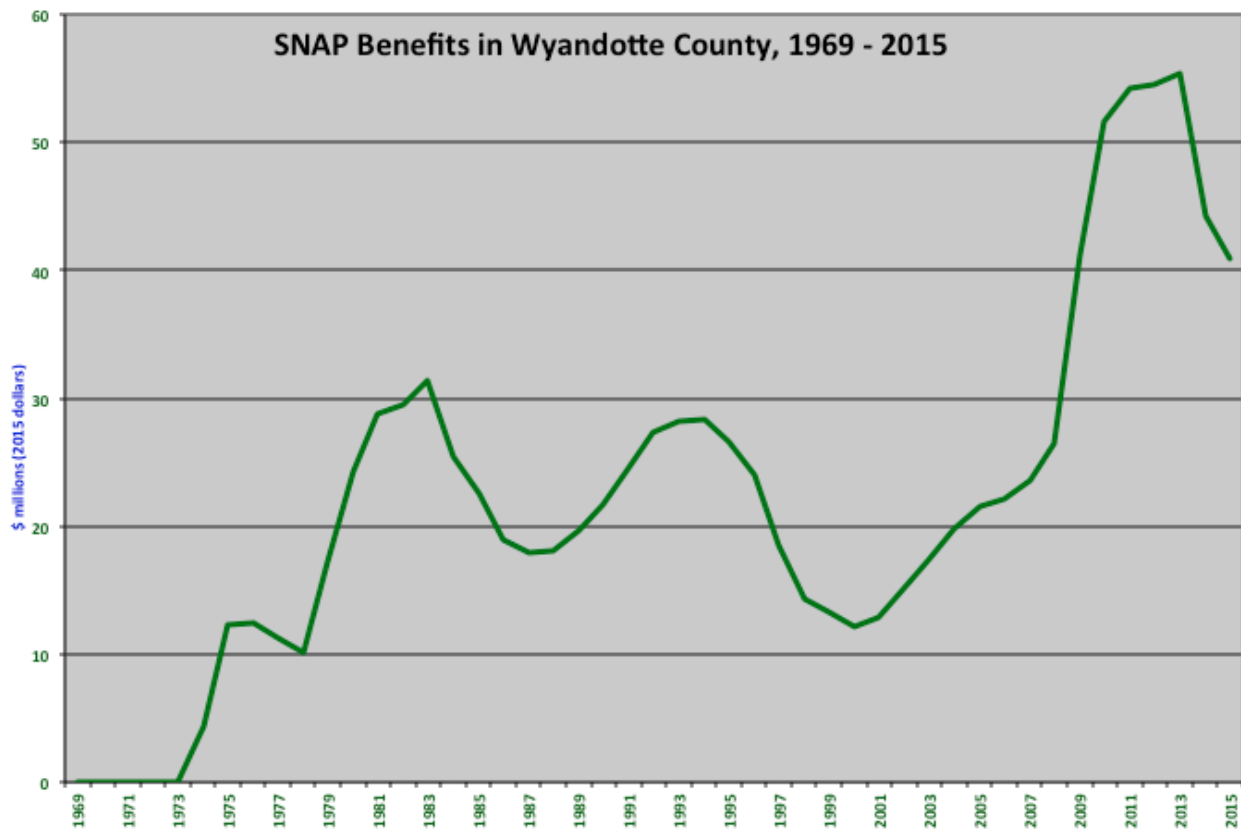
Map 8: Population Earning Less Than a Livable Wage in Wyandotte County, 1969 - 2015



Source: Federal Census, 2011-2015

Another way to track inequality in Wyandotte County is the growth of SNAP benefits (formerly known as food stamps) received by county residents of all races, as shown in Chart 9. While it appears that for some of many reasons — either no reliable records were kept, people were unwilling or unable to register for benefits, or the need was very slight in the early years for which this data has been compiled — no SNAP benefits were recorded from 1969 to 1972. After that, benefit levels hovered between \$10 million and \$30 million per year until the global housing finance crisis of 2008. When this crisis induced more people to apply for benefits, SNAP receipts quickly rose to a peak of \$55 million in 2013. Since then benefits have subsided somewhat, but still run higher than historic levels, at \$40 million per year.

Chart 9: SNAP Benefits in Wyandotte County, 1969 - 2015



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

Census data show that an average of 10,519 (18%) of the county’s households collected food stamps during the years 2011-2015. Of these, only 6,462 households (61%) lived below the poverty level, while 4,057 (39%) households were above the poverty line. More than three fourths (77%) of all households receiving SNAP benefits included residents who held jobs. Most household receiving benefits had children. About half of the county households collected SNAP benefits had at least one person with a disability. 45% of the households receiving benefits had a White householder, while 43% were Black, and 20% were Latino (Federal Census, 2011-2015).

The need for food stamps is rather startling, given Wyandotte’s heritage as a farm community, and the strength of the food business sector. All told, the county supports about 435 firms doing food-related business. These firms hire more than 12,000 employees, providing a payroll of more than \$491 million. The food manufacturing sector makes up one-sixth of the county’s manufacturing, with \$111 million of payroll. It is the largest single manufacturing sector in the county, led by baked goods (\$68 million in payroll) and animal slaughter and processing (\$27 million). The food manufacturing sector has grown 110% from a \$53 million payroll in 2010, from 23 to 32 firms, and from 1,263 to 1,870 employees in those six years. During this same time span, overall manufacturing payroll increased only 9%.

Yet despite this growth, the sector’s workers earn less today than they did in 2001, when the food manufacturing payroll was nearly \$100 million. Moreover, the sector paid its workers twice as much in 1969 (in 2015 dollars).

Chart 10: Personal Income in Food Manufacturing Industries, Wyandotte County, 2001 - 2015



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis. Note that there are differences between this data and Federal Census data listed below.

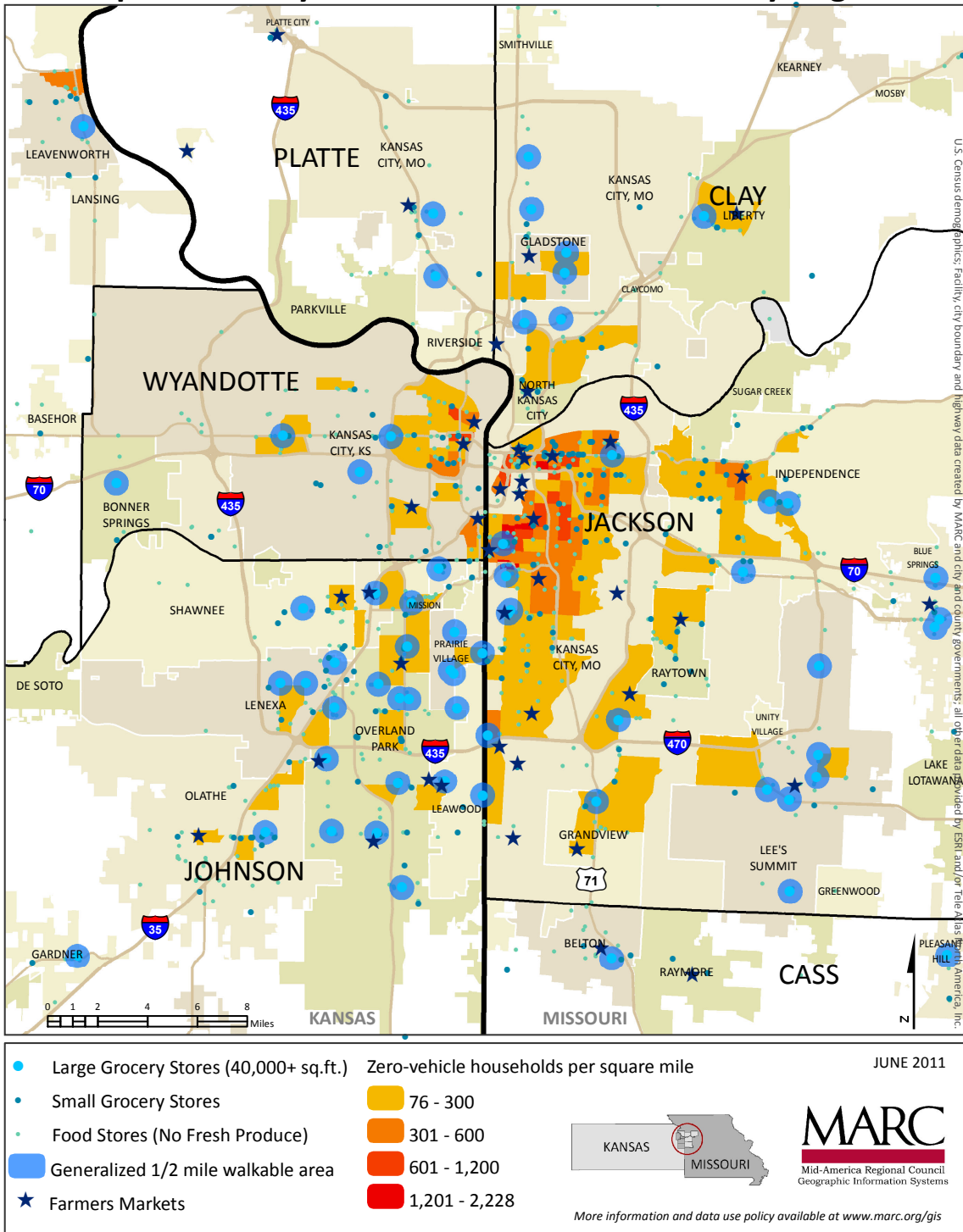
Appendix D: Timeline of Recent Store Openings and Closings

History of (WIC) Grocery Stores in Wyandotte County Since 2007

2007	CLOSED	Strong Ave Thriftway
	CLOSED	Apple Market (10 th St & Central)
	CLOSED	Apple Market (5420 Leavenworth Rd)
	OPEN	KC Rancho (10 th St & Central)
2008	CLOSED	Ball Sun Fresh (18 th & Central)
	CLOSED	Save A-Lot (N 63 Dr)
	RELOCATE	Chas Ball Sun Fresh (from 18 th & Central to 231 N 18 th St)
	OPEN	Happy Foods North (5420 Leavenworth Rd)
2010	OPEN	Queen's Price Chopper (Bonner Springs)
2011	CLOSED	Apple Market (7 th St)
2013	CLOSED	Chas Ball (4601 Parallel)
2014	CLOSED	Lipari Bros Thriftway (Kansas Ave)
	CLOSED	Bonner Springs Thriftway (Oak)
	CLOSED	KC Rancho (10 th St & Central)
	OPEN	Target
	OPEN	Hometown Thriftway (Bonner Springs/Oak)
	OPEN	Wal-Mart Neighborhood Center
2015	OPEN	El Rio Bravo (10 th St & Central)
	CLOSED	Hometown Thriftway (Bonner Springs/Oak)
2016	CLOSED	Price Chopper (43 rd & State)

(Sanchez, 2017)

Appendix E: Metro Area Food Access Map



Note that a new farmers market has been opened at Bonner Springs since this map was made.

Appendix F: Food Prices and Availability

Source: Food Pricing Study performed by Healthy Communities Wyandotte in collaboration with Megan Phillips Goldenberg.

Food Item	JOCO SM	WYCO SM1	WYCO D1	WYCO D2	WYCO SM2	WYCO D3	WYCO C1	Regional Average
Fruit—fresh								
Apples, any variety	\$2.49	\$2.11	\$2.00*	\$1.66	\$1.64	\$1.41	\$0.41	\$2.00
Bananas	\$1.62	\$1.62	\$1.81*	\$1.07	\$1.21	\$1.51	\$1.07	\$1.81
Grapes	\$2.57	\$1.92	\$2.02*	\$1.32	\$1.32	\$1.19	\$2.02*	\$2.02
Melon	\$4.99	\$2.62*	\$2.62*	\$3.99	\$2.98	\$0.99	\$2.49	\$2.62
Oranges	\$4.23	\$7.90	\$7.28*	\$5.32	\$5.32	\$5.53	\$7.28*	\$7.28
<i>Section Total</i>	<i>\$15.89</i>	<i>\$16.17</i>	<i>\$15.73*</i>	<i>\$13.37</i>	<i>\$12.47</i>	<i>\$10.63</i>	<i>\$13.27</i>	<i>\$15.73</i>
Vegetables—fresh								
Carrots, unpeeled	\$1.00	\$1.85	\$1.34*	\$0.85	\$0.67	\$0.50	\$0.79	\$1.34
Celery	\$0.62	\$0.62	\$0.44*	\$0.56	\$0.42	\$0.44	\$0.37	\$0.44
Green pepper	\$0.99	\$0.99	\$0.96*	\$0.99	\$0.68	\$0.50	\$0.79	\$0.96
Lettuce	\$1.21*	\$1.99	\$1.21*	\$1.49	\$0.98	\$1.19	\$1.49	\$1.21
Onions, yellow	\$1.61	\$1.25	\$1.76*	\$1.24	\$0.93	\$0.70	\$1.61	\$1.76
Tomatoes	\$0.48	\$0.56	\$0.42*	\$0.37	\$0.37	\$0.41	\$0.42*	\$0.42
Potatoes	\$2.08	\$10.40	\$20.01*	\$3.92	\$5.15	\$5.23	\$26.15	\$20.01
<i>Section Total</i>	<i>\$7.99</i>	<i>\$17.65</i>	<i>\$26.13*</i>	<i>\$9.42</i>	<i>\$9.19</i>	<i>\$8.96</i>	<i>\$31.62</i>	<i>\$26.13</i>
Fruit, canned								
Oranges, mandarin	\$0.86	\$1.08	\$0.89	\$0.93	\$0.85	\$0.68	\$0.94	\$0.84
Peaches	\$1.16	\$2.23	\$1.79	\$1.69	\$1.67	\$1.54	\$2.32	\$1.47
<i>Section Total</i>	<i>\$2.01</i>	<i>\$3.32</i>	<i>\$2.68</i>	<i>\$2.63</i>	<i>\$2.52</i>	<i>\$2.23</i>	<i>\$3.27</i>	<i>\$2.30</i>
Vegetables, canned								
Mushrooms	\$0.69	\$0.69	\$0.46	\$0.42	\$0.68	\$0.55	\$0.89	\$0.84
Spaghetti sauce	\$0.89	\$1.49	\$1.08	\$0.99	\$1.08	\$0.99	\$0.79	\$1.02
Tomato sauce	\$0.29	\$0.29	\$0.35	\$0.29	\$0.33	\$0.56*	\$0.59	\$0.56
<i>Section Total</i>	<i>\$1.87</i>	<i>\$2.47</i>	<i>\$1.89</i>	<i>\$1.70</i>	<i>\$2.09</i>	<i>\$2.10</i>	<i>\$2.27</i>	<i>\$2.42</i>
Fruits and Vegetables, frozen								
Orange juice, concentrate	\$7.35	\$7.35	\$9.51*	\$12.53	\$11.76	\$7.35*	\$7.35	\$7.35
Broccoli	\$0.60	\$0.60	\$0.46*	\$0.37	\$0.49	\$0.60	\$0.60	\$0.60
Green beans	\$2.27	\$2.27	\$1.68*	\$1.42	\$1.87	\$2.27	\$2.27	\$2.27
Green peas	\$1.77	\$1.49	\$1.20*	\$1.21	\$1.49	\$1.77	\$1.77	\$1.77
French fries	\$0.86	\$0.86	\$1.38	\$0.62	\$0.61	\$0.86	\$0.86	\$0.86
<i>Section Total</i>	<i>\$12.85</i>	<i>\$12.57</i>	<i>\$14.22</i>	<i>\$16.14</i>	<i>\$16.22</i>	<i>\$12.85</i>	<i>\$12.85</i>	<i>\$12.85</i>

Breads, Cereals, and Other Grain Products, fresh								
Bread, white	\$1.85	\$1.85	\$2.00	\$1.59	\$2.05	\$1.33	\$2.18	\$2.29
Bread, whole wheat	\$1.19	\$0.93	\$2.04	\$0.79	\$1.50	\$0.49	\$1.13	\$0.96
Hamburger buns	\$1.38	\$1.38	\$1.25	\$0.99	\$1.18	\$0.83	\$1.29	\$1.12
Rolls, dinner	\$1.16	\$1.16	\$0.70*	\$0.40	\$0.84	\$0.70*	\$0.70*	\$0.70
French/Italian Bread,	\$0.85	\$0.50*	\$0.50*	\$0.57	\$0.60	\$0.42	\$0.50*	\$0.50
Bagels, plain, enriched	\$1.99	\$2.99	\$1.51*	\$0.99	\$2.65	\$1.06	\$1.51*	\$1.51
Bread crumbs	\$0.44	\$0.44	\$0.22	\$0.20	\$0.22	\$0.16	\$0.34	\$0.34
<i>Section Total</i>	<i>\$8.87</i>	<i>\$9.25</i>	<i>\$8.22</i>	<i>\$5.53</i>	<i>\$9.04</i>	<i>\$4.99</i>	<i>\$7.78</i>	<i>\$7.43</i>
Breads, Cereals, and Other Grain Products, dry								
Ready-to-eat cereal-corn flakes	\$0.11	\$0.11	\$0.10	\$0.09	\$0.11	\$0.08	\$0.11	\$0.11
Ready-to-eat cereal- oats	\$1.51	\$2.22	\$1.43	\$1.42	\$1.53	\$1.06	\$1.09	\$1.20
Flour, white, all-purpose	\$0.42	\$0.42	\$0.53	\$0.58	\$0.54	\$0.34	\$0.47	\$0.42
Macaroni	\$1.43	\$1.43	\$1.31	\$1.30	\$1.31	\$1.90	\$1.56	\$1.42
Noodles, yolk-free,	\$3.36	\$2.46	\$1.88	\$1.79	\$2.41	\$1.13	\$2.13	\$1.69
Popcorn, microwave, (unpopped)	\$0.43	\$0.54	\$0.60	\$0.19	\$0.28	\$0.40	\$0.50	\$0.62
Rice, white, long-grain, enriched	\$2.97	\$2.18	\$1.88	\$1.55	\$1.45	\$1.34	\$1.37	\$1.29
Spaghetti, enriched	\$0.89	\$0.75	\$0.69	\$0.68	\$0.69	\$1.03	\$1.16	\$0.79
<i>Section Total</i>	<i>\$11.11</i>	<i>\$10.10</i>	<i>\$8.41</i>	<i>\$7.59</i>	<i>\$8.32</i>	<i>\$7.28</i>	<i>\$8.39</i>	<i>\$7.55</i>
Dairy Products, fresh								
Milk, 1% lowfat	\$7.63	\$7.63	\$11.48	\$5.60	\$5.36	\$4.82	\$5.11*	\$5.11
Milk, whole	\$4.09	\$3.99	\$3.55	\$2.49	\$2.60	\$2.28	\$3.99	\$2.52
Cheese, cheddar	\$0.56	\$0.50	\$1.56	\$0.50	\$0.50	\$0.31	\$0.54	\$0.40
Cheese, cottage	\$1.03	\$0.88	\$1.14	\$0.58	\$0.82	\$0.52	\$0.75*	\$0.75
Cheese, mozzarella	\$0.28	\$0.29	\$0.33	\$0.12	\$0.23	\$0.16	\$0.41	\$0.18
<i>Section Total</i>	<i>\$13.59</i>	<i>\$13.28</i>	<i>\$18.06</i>	<i>\$9.29</i>	<i>\$9.51</i>	<i>\$8.08</i>	<i>\$10.81</i>	<i>\$8.97</i>
Dairy Products, canned								
Evaporated milk	\$0.26	\$0.31*	\$0.33	\$0.26	\$0.31	\$0.23	\$0.40	\$0.31
<i>Section Total</i>	<i>\$0.26</i>	<i>\$0.31*</i>	<i>\$0.33</i>	<i>\$0.26</i>	<i>\$0.31</i>	<i>\$0.23</i>	<i>\$0.40</i>	<i>\$0.31</i>
Meat and Meat Alternates, fresh								
Beef, ground	\$11.77	\$18.08	\$10.94*	\$7.05	\$19.57	\$11.77	\$15.32	\$10.94
Chicken, fryer	\$3.24	\$3.43	\$2.30*	\$2.30*	\$1.94	\$1.79	\$2.30*	\$2.30
Chicken, thighs	\$5.47	\$5.47	\$4.41*	\$3.27	\$5.39	\$6.30	\$4.41*	\$4.41
Turkey, ground	\$3.91	\$3.91	\$2.72*	\$3.29	\$2.48	\$2.74	\$3.99	\$2.72
Pork, ground	\$5.45	\$5.45	\$4.45*	\$4.45*	\$4.45*	\$4.45*	\$4.45*	\$4.45
Turkey/ham lunch meat	\$3.57	\$3.65	\$4.81	\$2.40	\$2.35	\$2.06	\$3.43	\$2.13
Eggs, grade A, large	\$1.97	\$1.83	\$1.42	\$1.40	\$0.68	\$0.72	\$2.11	\$1.41
<i>Section Total</i>	<i>\$35.39</i>	<i>\$41.81</i>	<i>\$31.04</i>	<i>\$24.16</i>	<i>\$36.86</i>	<i>\$29.83</i>	<i>\$36.01</i>	<i>\$28.35</i>

Meat and Meat Alternates, frozen and canned								
Fish, flounder, cod, frozen	\$11.58	\$7.20*	\$7.20*	\$8.99	\$5.96	\$6.78	\$7.20*	\$7.20
Tuna fish, chunk-style, water packed	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$1.80	\$1.66	\$2.26	\$1.30	\$1.78	\$1.69
Beans, kidney	\$0.59	\$0.82	\$0.77*	\$0.61	\$0.72	\$0.55	\$0.69	\$0.77
Beans, baked	\$2.80	\$2.80	\$1.85*	\$0.92	\$0.93	\$1.85*	\$2.95	\$1.85
<i>Section Total</i>	<i>\$16.47</i>	<i>\$12.32</i>	<i>\$11.63</i>	<i>\$12.18</i>	<i>\$9.87</i>	<i>\$10.48</i>	<i>\$12.63</i>	<i>\$11.52</i>
Fats and Oils								
Margarine	\$1.64*	\$3.61	\$1.64*	\$0.94	\$0.86	\$0.92	\$3.61	\$1.64
Shortening	\$0.25*	\$0.31	\$0.63	\$0.33	\$0.35	\$0.25*	\$0.32	\$0.25
Salad dressing	\$0.37	\$0.49	\$0.47	\$0.36	\$0.60	\$0.34	\$0.37	\$0.33
Vegetable oil	\$0.37	\$0.97	\$0.44	\$0.37	\$0.37	\$0.35	\$0.52	\$0.37
<i>Section Total</i>	<i>\$2.63</i>	<i>\$5.37</i>	<i>\$3.17</i>	<i>\$2.00</i>	<i>\$2.18</i>	<i>\$1.86</i>	<i>\$4.82</i>	<i>\$2.59</i>
Sugars and Sweets								
Sugar, brown	\$0.09	\$0.09	\$0.05	\$0.05	\$0.05	\$0.06	\$0.11	\$0.09
Sugar, powdered	\$0.26	\$0.26	\$0.16	\$0.15	\$0.16	\$0.17	\$0.34	\$0.26
Sugar, white, granulated	\$0.28	\$0.20	\$0.28	\$0.26	\$0.32	\$0.20	\$0.22	\$0.19
Jelly, grape	\$0.25	\$0.34*	\$0.67	\$0.37	\$0.43	\$0.32	\$0.34	\$0.34
Molasses	\$0.32	\$0.30	\$0.25*	\$0.25*	\$0.25*	\$0.25*	\$0.25*	\$0.25
Pancake syrup	\$0.19	\$0.19	\$0.19	\$0.22	\$0.21	\$0.19	\$0.22*	\$0.19
Chocolate chips, semi-sweet	\$0.38	\$0.38	\$0.33	\$0.37	\$0.33	\$0.30	\$0.10	\$0.26
Fruit drink, refrigerated	\$1.49	\$3.59	\$1.85	\$3.99	\$2.37	\$1.69	\$2.19	\$2.04
Fudgesicles,	\$1.80	\$1.18	\$0.78*	\$0.83	\$0.81	\$0.83	\$0.78*	\$0.78
<i>Section Total</i>	<i>\$5.06</i>	<i>\$6.53</i>	<i>\$4.55</i>	<i>\$6.50</i>	<i>\$4.94</i>	<i>\$4.00</i>	<i>\$3.78</i>	<i>\$4.40</i>
Other Food Items, optional								
Baking powder	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00*	\$0.00
Baking soda	\$0.01	\$0.01	\$0.01	\$0.01	\$0.01	\$0.01	\$0.01*	\$0.01
Chile powder	\$0.33	\$0.72	\$0.32	\$0.35	\$0.63	\$0.24	\$0.34*	\$0.34
Cinnamon	\$0.04	\$0.04	\$0.03	\$0.04	\$0.08	\$0.02	\$0.03*	\$0.03
Cumin	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$0.02	\$0.03	\$0.06	\$0.01	\$0.04*	\$0.04
Onion powder	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$0.09	\$0.10	\$0.20	\$0.07	\$0.08*	\$0.08
Garlic powder	\$0.24	\$0.24	\$0.13	\$0.25	\$0.38	\$0.11	\$0.15*	\$0.15
Italian herb seasoning	\$0.18	\$0.04	\$0.04	\$0.04	\$0.08	\$0.01	\$0.03*	\$0.03
Oregano	\$0.25	\$0.62	\$0.53*	\$0.36	\$0.48	\$0.05	\$0.53*	\$0.53
Paprika	\$0.05	\$0.05	\$0.10	\$0.06	\$0.13	\$0.06	\$0.05*	\$0.05
Black pepper, ground	\$0.11	\$0.11	\$0.13	\$0.12	\$0.16	\$0.10	\$0.09*	\$0.09
Salt	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00*	\$0.00
Vanilla	\$1.66	\$1.66	\$1.15*	\$0.39	\$0.38	\$5.44	\$1.15*	\$1.15
Chicken bouillon, reduced sodium, cubes	\$1.79	\$2.05	\$1.32*	\$1.32*	\$1.32*	\$1.32*	\$1.32*	\$1.32
Catsup	\$0.04	\$0.04	\$0.04	\$0.03	\$0.04	\$0.04	\$0.04*	\$0.04

Soy sauce	\$0.45	\$0.45	\$0.35	\$0.28	\$0.28	\$2.26	\$0.45*	\$0.45
Lemon juice	\$0.03	\$0.03*	\$0.03	\$0.04	\$0.04	\$0.03	\$0.03*	\$0.03
Gelatin, powdered,	\$2.89	\$1.55*	\$3.27	\$0.44	\$2.24	\$1.55*	\$1.55*	\$1.55
Chocolate drink mix, powdered	\$4.58	\$2.85*	\$2.85	\$6.10	\$6.65	\$1.89	\$2.85*	\$2.85
<i>Section Total</i>	<i>\$12.85</i>	<i>\$10.66</i>	<i>\$10.41</i>	<i>\$9.97</i>	<i>\$13.17</i>	<i>\$13.22</i>	<i>\$8.75*</i>	<i>\$8.75</i>
Total Cost	\$170.72	\$195.62	\$172.20	\$143.53	\$158.34	\$136.33	\$201.52	\$181.17

* Indicates that the county average price was inserted, due to a missing item.

Appendix G: Identified Food Industry Clusters

Table 10: Farmers' Markets in Wyandotte County

Project Name
KCK Farmers Market - Central Ave
KCK Farmers Market - KCCC
KCK Farmers Market - Strawberry Hill
Rosedale Farmers Market

Table 11: Community Gardens in Wyandotte County

Project Name
Audrey's 10th Street Garden
Glanville Towers Senior Garden
Grace and Luther Johnson Homes Community Garden
Grace Community Church at Avenue of Life
Greater Pentecostal Temple Senior Garden Project
Growing Together Community Garden at Central States SDA
Hillcrest Community Garden
Kansas Bhutanese Garden
Latino Health For All
Minnie St. Garden/Healthy Kidz Community Garden
Oakwood Gardens
Quindaro Gardens Mutual Aid Society
Rainbow Garden
Rosedale Towers
Salsa Sabor y Salud at the 8th Street YMCA KC, KS
South Early St.
St. Joseph Community Garden (KC, KS)
St. Patrick Chin Catholic Church Community Garden
St. Paul's Episcopal Church KC, KS Community Garden
Strawberry Hill Neighborhood Garden
Strugglers Hill Neighborhood Garden
The Pathways
Wyandotte County Neighbors Garden
Wyandotte Towers Community Garden

Table 12: Giving Grove Community Orchards in Wyandotte County

Project Name
KU Med Food Is Medicine
RDA S. Early St. Garden
Cross-Lines
SouthRidge Apartment Complex
WCAC
Glanville Towers
Strawberry Hill Community Garden
Quindaro Gardens (Righteous Roots)
Turner Community Garden
Wyandotte Methodist
Bhutanese Garden
Heartland Habitat*
Catholic Charities Office Location
Catholic Charities Shalom House
Arrowhead Middle School
Rosedale Middle School
Harmon High School
KCKCC
Hillview Church of God
Schlagle High School
Bethel Orchard
Fisher Park
Sumner Academy
State Street Project
Stony Point North
Hillcrest Transitional Housing of Kansas
Turtle Hill

Table 13: Identified Food Manufacturers in Wyandotte County

Name	General Description	Retail	Wholesale	Copack/Custom
Original Juan	Specialty hot sauces	Y	Y	Y
Art's Mexican Food Products	Chips, tortillas, sauces, spices	Y	Y	
Bichelmeyer Meats	Beef, pork, custom game, smoked products	Y	Y	Y
Liberty Fruit Co., Inc.	Fruit and vegetable wholesaler & minimum processor	Y	Y	Y
Nordic Foods, Inc.	Meat Processor	N	Y	Y
KC Classics Gourmet Food	Dips, Sauces, and Dressings	Y	Y	Y
Spanish Gardens	Salsa	N	Y	Y
Herb Company LLC	Seasonings and Spices			
Armour Meats	Meat Processor		Y	
Bartlett Milling, Co.	Flour Mill		Y	
Best Harvest Bakeries	Bun Bakery		Y	
Bimbo Bakeries USA	Baked Goods		Y	
Estella's LLC	Sauces, canned tomatoes			
Frito Lay	Snack Food Manufacturing		Y	
Kansas City Steak, Co	Meat Processor	Y		Y
Keebler, Co	Cookie, Cones, Pie crusts	Y	Y	Y
Tortilleria San Antonio	meat processor, tortillas	Y	Y	
Scavuzzos Foodservice Company	Meat Processor	Y	Y	

Appendix H: Principles of a Healthy, Sustainable Food System

In June 2010, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (formerly American Dietetics Association), American Nurses Association, American Planning Association, and American Public Health Association initiated a collaborative process to develop a set of shared food system principles. The following principles are a result of this process and have been collectively endorsed by these organizations.

A healthy, sustainable food system is:

HEALTH-PROMOTING

- Supports the physical and mental health of all farmers, workers and eaters
- Accounts for the public health impacts across the entire lifecycle of how food is produced, processed, packaged, labeled, distributed, marketed, consumed and disposed

SUSTAINABLE

- Conserves, protects, and regenerates natural resources, landscapes and biodiversity
- Meets our current food and nutrition needs without compromising the ability of the system to meet the needs of future generations

RESILIENT

- Thrives in the face of challenges, such as unpredictable climate, increased pest resistance, and declining, increasingly expensive water and energy supplies

DIVERSE IN

- Size and scale — includes a diverse range of food production, transformation, distribution, marketing, consumption, and disposal practices, occurring at diverse scales, from local and regional, to national and global
- Geography — considers geographic differences in natural resources, climate, customs, and heritage
- Culture — appreciates and supports a diversity of cultures, socio-demographics, and lifestyles
- Choice — provides a variety of health-promoting food choices for all

FAIR

- Supports fair and just communities and conditions for all farmers, workers and eaters
- Provides equitable physical access to affordable food that is health promoting and culturally appropriate

ECONOMICALLY BALANCED

- Provides economic opportunities that are balanced across geographic regions of the country and at different scales of activity, from local to global, for a diverse range of food system stakeholders
- Affords farmers and workers in all sectors of the system a living wage

TRANSPARENT

- Provides opportunities for farmers, workers and eaters to gain the knowledge necessary to understand how food is produced, transformed, distributed, marketed, consumed and disposed
- Empowers farmers, workers and eaters to actively participate in decision-making in all sectors of the system

A healthy, sustainable food system emphasizes, strengthens, and makes visible the interdependent and inseparable relationships between individual sectors (from production to waste disposal) and characteristics (health-promoting, sustainable, resilient, diverse, fair, economically balanced, and transparent) of the system.²¹

²¹ <https://www.planning.org/nationalcenters/health/foodprinciples.htm>

Appendix I: Master Plans and Planning for Healthy Food

Master Plans are an appropriate mechanism for building this foundation. Master plans are legally and politically significant documents that provide long-range, shared vision for the entire built environment of a community. It provides a framework a set of goals, and decision-making criteria for residents, businesses, and policymakers. Among other issues, the Master Plan can identify:

- Commercial, residential, and mixed land uses
- Priority areas for development or redevelopment
- Opportunities to extend, expand, or improve open space, recreational areas, and civic facilities;
- Strategies and priorities for economic development;
- Conservation needs (environmental, agricultural, historical, etc.)
- Transportation coordination including active and/or public transit option

Notably, comprehensive plans are supposed to look at the community as a system with no particular policy item considered in isolation of any other.

Addressing Public Health and Food Access through Planning

Studies suggest that public health interventions are wasted if they don't link food systems to other systems- transportation, housing, recreation, etc. (Raja, Born, & Russell, 2008).

Comprehensive Plans intending to prioritize public health outcomes should include the following elements:

- Improve Access to Healthy Foods and Nutrition
- Assess and Expand Opportunities for Physical Activity
- Ensure Equitable Healthcare and Health Literacy
- Ensure and Expand on a Healthy Housing Stock
- Understand and Improve Environmental Impacts and Conditions²²

This starts with an development approach that prioritizes community health from the beginning, including:

- Reference to health in the plan's vision, mission, engagement strategy, and approach
- Engage the public and local public health professionals in defining priority health issues, such as the Community Health Assessment process. Key partners can include, health department, schools, community groups, nonprofit organizations, real estate community, elected officials, local and regional leaders
- Establish a sound evidence base for plan recommendations and strategies
- Use metrics to track and demonstrate progress:
 - Local health department data, local land-use databases, U.S. Census Bureau, USDA Census of Agriculture, Community Commons, local school district data, etc.
 - Include Health Impact Assessments in establishing evidence base for plan monitoring and evaluation
- Commitment to implementation

²² <http://njplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/6-Health-and-Food-Systems-Master-Plan-Element.pdf>

- Integration with other plans and visions²³ (Hodgson, 2012)

After collecting and reviewing nearly 1000 comprehensive and/or sustainability plans, the APA developed a list of food systems topics and strategies for evaluating plans. The APA's criteria include the following:

Food Systems

- rural agriculture (e.g., small- and large-scale dairy, livestock, factory farms/concentrated animal feeding operations poultry, fruit and vegetable production in rural and metropolitan areas)
- urban agriculture (e.g., urban farming; community, school, or backyard gardens; poultry; bees; small livestock)
- processing (e.g., community/commercial kitchens, canneries, butcheries, and other food processing facilities or infrastructure)
- distribution (e.g., dry and cold storage facilities and warehouses, transportation and delivery routes, networks)
- local sourcing
- retail (e.g., supermarkets, grocery stores, corner stores, convenience stores, cafeterias, restaurants, dining halls, fast food and formula restaurants, farmers' markets, roadside farm stands, vending machines, mobile vending, and other food vending)
- marketing and advertising (e.g., commercial advertisements, menu labeling, food labeling, media campaigns)
- access and availability (e.g., physical and economic ability of consumers to obtain safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food in the home, school, worksite, and neighborhood settings)
- federal assistance (e.g., electronic benefit transfer (EBT) The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), WIC)
- community assistance (e.g., food banks, food pantries, Meals on Wheels, soup kitchens)
- food education (e.g., health, nutrition, culinary and cooking promotion and education)
- waste (e.g., backyard composting, municipal curbside composting, edible food waste recovery)

Food Access

- reduce access to fast food restaurants
- improve access to supermarkets or other large grocery stores
- improve access to farmers' markets
- improve access to community gardens
- improve the variety of healthy foods sold at small grocery stores
- improve the variety of healthy foods sold at convenience stores
- improve the variety of healthy foods sold at liquor stores
- improve the variety of healthy foods offered by fast food restaurants
- improve the variety of healthy foods offered by full-service restaurants
- improve the variety of healthy foods offered by mobile vending

²³ https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/legacy_resources/nationalcenters/health/toolsforhealth/pdf/healthyplanmaking.pdf

Appendix J: Latino Health For All Coalition Action Plan

Vision: Health For All

Mission: To reduce diabetes and cardiovascular disease among Latinos in Kansas City/Wyandotte County through a collaborative partnership to promote healthy nutrition, physical activity, and access to health services.

NUTRITION

- Nutrition 1 - Promote home vegetable gardening and gardening in large public places through training and support
- Nutrition 2 - Promote healthy food at Tiendas - healthy "corner" store (showcasing, placement, cost leaders, cooperative networks).
- Nutrition 3 - Implement Farm to School practices
- Nutrition 4 - Develop Healthy Food School food procurement policies
- Nutrition 5 - Improve nutrition standards policies and guidelines to limit unhealthy choices early childcare and education child care settings
- Nutrition 6 - Provide incentives to encourage existing store or restaurants to provide healthier food options or to encourage the development of new retail venues that offer healthier foods
- Nutrition 7 - Enhance Access to public transportation to supermarkets and large grocery stores
- Nutrition 8 - Promote (e.g., signage, product placement, pricing strategies, and menu labeling) the purchase of fruits and vegetables at local restaurants and food venues
- Nutrition 9 - Work to provide Spanish-language recipes and translations at markets

Appendix K: Recommendations from Northeast Residents

Wyandotte County Food Economy Assessment: Resident Recommendations

Introduction

Like many residents across the nation, many Wyandotte County, KS residents live in what the USDA defines as a food desert. This often leads to increased food insecurity or the lack of affordable fresh foods. The county is currently conducting a food economy assessment to improve access to foods for all residents.

Process

Resident feedback and recommendations for the assessment are critical in evaluating our current food economy and making improvements that will benefit all residents. This report is the result of resident meetings conducted to discuss current challenges to food access in the community and provide resident centered solutions.

Meetings were conducted during the following dates:

June 7, 2017, 3:00pm-5pm, Health Department of Wyandotte County
August 8, 2017, 3:30pm-5:30pm, Beatrice L. Lee Center

Residents Present

- Emily Brown, Chair
- Elnora Jefferson
- Angela Greene
- Shery Greene
- Linda Quinn
- Cardelia Walker

Resident Values

During the discussion with residents, it was clear that residents held many attitudes and values that shaped their view of food access challenges and solutions.

- **Collaboration:** Residents want to be seen as equal partners in community based solutions to address food access in Wyandotte County. Residents are ready and willing to share in the work necessary to improve food access and health in their community.
- **Self Reliance:** Residents believe in cultivating a spirit of self reliance in the community. Providing training for residents to obtain the skills necessary for self reliance is of great importance.
- **Ownership:** Is extremely important to the residents. Many have worked hard to obtain home ownership and are vested in the success of their community.

- **Unity:** Residents value unity. It is in true unity that we experience community.
- **Quality:** Residents value increasing access to quality food. This includes increased access to organic produce and other healthy options.
- **Diverse Offerings:** Residents want access to quality food that is also culturally appropriate and reflects the growing diversity in Wyandotte County.

***Note of Concern**

There was considerable conversation from residents regarding past request for resident recommendations. There were even some feelings of mistrust for the city expressed after requesting support for a grocery store for over 20+ years.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made with resident values at the center.

- **Resident Representation:** Residents respectfully request ongoing representation on the committee or governing body that makes decisions regarding food access in the county.
- **Community Owned Grocery Store:** Residents value the model of a Community Owned grocery store that has been successful in communities across the country. Residents would like the support of the city in this resident centered solution.
- **Resident Training:** Increased opportunities for residents to gain skills needed for self reliance and food sovereignty. Trainings could be focused on cultivating home growing skills, canning, meal planning, etc.

Conclusion

The resident committee is grateful for the opportunity to present recommendations to the Food Economy Assessment Team. The people of Wyandotte County have always been resilient in the face of adversity and the challenge of food access will be no different. We look forward to further engagement regarding this issue.

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Appendix L: Emerging Models for Neighborhood-Based Markets & Small Format Stores

Argus Farm Stops, Ann Arbor MI

<http://www.argusfarmstop.com/>

This re-purposed gas station (and most lately a medical marijuana dispensary), features multiple food offerings. This year-round store describes itself as a farmers market, only providing the infrastructure and the customer service of a corner market, while local farmers and food artisans provide the goods. Producers stock their own shelves, control their own signs and displays, and set their own prices. The store retains 20% of all sales to cover overhead costs, returning 80% of sales to farmers. There are over 140 producers selling their products through this 1,300-square-foot building.

In addition, a variety of ready to eat foods such as burritos, sandwiches, and salads, plus indoor and outdoor seating, creates a foundation for community gathering and socializing. In an interview, owner Kathy Sample said, "There was no sense of neighborhood on that corner" when it was simply an abandoned parking lot. "Now the sense of community around there is pretty remarkable."

In its first year, 2014, the store grossed over a million dollars in sales of locally produced items. By 2015, the store employed 16 people – this includes 7 full-time and 9 part-time. All are paid above Michigan's minimum wage, with starting salaries at \$10/hour. Full-time employees also receive health benefits.

Less than 3 years after opening their first store, Argus opened a second store in 2017, prompted by the encouragement and enthusiasm of the local farmers. Their second store is inside a refurbished cyclery that was originally a grocery store. The owners report that neighbors remember when it was a grocery store that delivered food to their homes. Argus Farm Stop doesn't currently deliver but a mobile market is high on their priority list. While the owners originally insisted that they would never open a second store, they are now saying that about a third store. But they think Ann Arbor, a city with a population of 120,781 in 2016, could support at least a third store, if not more. "It's a neighborhood store," Sample says. She feels every neighborhood could support one.

Argus Farm Stop is modeled after Local Roots Market and Café in Wooster, OH (see below).

Local Roots, Wooster OH

<https://www.localrootswooster.com/>

Local Roots was established in 2009 in an empty county-owned building by a group of volunteers with the mission of establishing a year-round market place for the purpose of connecting consumers and producers of locally grown foods and other agricultural products. The county donated use of the building in its early years.

The store's goals are to encourage healthy eating, expand local economic development, and promote community involvement and sustainable living. They feature products from 150 area farmers. The café serves lunch and an onsite commercial kitchen incubates food entrepreneurs.

A second store opened in 2012 after the first store grossed \$1 million in sales, returning 90% of that to area farmers.

Local Roots was also featured in its early stages in Meter's 2011 study, *Ohio Food Systems: Farms at the Heart of it All*. See www.crcworks.org/ohfood.pdf.

The Farmer's Hand Pantry, Detroit MI

<https://www.thefarmershand.com/>

In Detroit's historic Corktown, The Farmer's Hand Pantry is replicating the neighborhood store model. After opening in 2016, this store works with over 100 Michigan-only growers and producers, sells an estimated 1,000 pounds of produce a week and returns 70% of sales to its partners.

Wirth Co-op Grocery, Minneapolis MN

<https://wirth.coop/>

The Wirth Co-op Grocery recently opened a 4,500-square-foot store at Golden Valley Road and Penn Ave North in a low-income neighborhood of North Minneapolis. The project benefited from a \$500,000 federal grant and technical assistance from several other cooperative resources in the Twin Cities region. It charges \$100 for membership, with extended payment options available for lower-income residents.

Friendship Store (Seward Cooperative), Minneapolis MN

<http://seward.coop/>

Seward Cooperative, established for 45 years, opened its second store in 2015 in a middle-class area of Minneapolis with a strong African-American population. This is a smaller-format store placing a strong focus on hiring neighborhood residents and offering foods that match resident preferences. Having the backing of a prosperous flagship store offers the new store considerable advantages; a co-op store opened by African-American community leaders just a few blocks away in the 1970s failed.

Appendix M: Other Useful Models

Shreveport Inner-City Food Networks

For more information, see www.crcworks.org/arklatex16.pdf

In the city of Shreveport, Louisiana, several partners have formed a collaboration to foster food production, healthy eating, and community capacity among low-income residents.

What is perhaps most impressive about this initiative is that high-level officials at several universities are active in the collaboration. More importantly, each official works in city neighborhoods, engaging directly with low-income residents.

The collaboration is aligned with We Grow Together, a coalition that has addressed hunger in low-income neighborhoods of the city. The Slow Food chapter of Northwest Louisiana and LSU Extension are key partners in the effort. Their goal is to build a network of interrelated facilities and social connections that will foster a culture that promotes health. This means that diverse strategies are being pursued at the same time, hoping to work synergistically in building capacity among community members. Tackling a combination of approaches in one neighborhood, they aim to make more concerted impacts.

Institutional partners include Dennis Wissing, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the Louisiana State University School of Allied Health Professions; Janice Sneed, Vice Chancellor of Southern University at Shreveport; Lucinda Murray the Occupational Therapy Program Director at the Louisiana State University School of Allied Health Professions; Mary Hawkins, an Assistant Professor at the Department of Kinesiology and Health Science at Louisiana State University in Shreveport; and Emmanuel Clotey, an Assistant Professor in the same department; and many others.

Sneed has worked with officials in the City of Shreveport to launch planning for a grocery store and farmers market in the MLK Neighborhood, which is close to the Southern University campus. When fully built, Sneed envisions that the facility will have a commercial kitchen and business incubator where residents can learn food preparation skills, test out a potential commercial product, and learn how to better fashion an emerging business.

Murray works with student volunteers who cleared land near the church to create a community garden with 10 plots where residents of the church's Hope House could grow food. She reported that interest in growing food is high, because the neighborhood has no grocery stores.

Hawkins hosts community health fairs in low-income communities where people can obtain information about living healthier lifestyles, and devoting more time to walking and biking.

In addition to his responsibilities as dean, Wissing maintains a community practice by managing a free pharmacy clinic run by the MLK Health Center. While patients wait for prescriptions to be filled at no cost, they are encouraged to select free, fresh food to take home. This food has been delivered by a nonprofit distributor, Shreveport Green. Wissing says his indicator of the strong interest the community holds in the clinic is that 96% of its customers have returned for further

care. This amounts to the largest return on investment that any project he has undertaken in Shreveport he has experienced, he added.

Clotey teaches an introductory course in public health with the theme, “Food is Medicine.” He adds that “75% of health is eating healthy food, having clean water and air, and getting enough sleep.” Through community assessments, his team has identified homes where children live who require special attention. The college students work directly with these households to help them locate sources of healthy foods, and turn to corner stores to encourage the proprietors to carry more healthy food options. Clotey added that where he grew up as a farmer in Africa, food is interwoven into the culture. Neighbors tell each other stories that take root in local culture and carry forward traditions. These tales encourage positive behaviors that would not otherwise be embraced by the culture. “Food has a history there. Part of eating is story telling.”²⁴

Minneapolis Staple Foods Ordinance (2008; revised 2014)

The City of Minneapolis adopted measures to increase the offerings of fresh fruit and vegetables at corner grocery stores in 2008. The initiative was expanded and refined in 2014. While the program has been in many ways successful, city officials have also learned from implementing the ordinance that more comprehensive approaches are also required.

Public Health staff noted that the staple foods initiative was launched out of an awareness that obesity rates in Minneapolis are higher in communities of color, and in areas where poverty is concentrated. These conditions especially affect U.S.-born Latinos and Blacks (Ali, 2010).

In partnership with a Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP), City officials devised strategies based on comprehensive, systemic activity, pursuing several guiding principles: (1) Action should focus on those communities that experience the greatest needs; (2) Interventions should affect multiple environments at once (saying, for example: day care facilities, parks, housing complexes, neighborhoods, schools, worksites, and corner stores). Their focus was placed upon (3) *improving food environments* by altering practices, availability, affordability, and opportunity, all at the same time.

In a 2010 presentation to the annual meeting of the former Community Food Security Coalition, City staff highlighted issues prevalent in Minneapolis that are very similar to those in Kansas City, Kansas: lack of food access, overabundance of fast foods and convenience foods, transportation barriers, lack of access to physical activity, and limited affordability of fresh food.

To improve access to fresh foods, the city adopted the Minneapolis Staple Foods Ordinance in 2008. Section (c) of this Ordinance stated, “All grocery stores licensed under this chapter must offer for sale food for home preparation and consumption, on a continuous basis, at least three (3) varieties of qualifying, non-expired or spoiled, food in each of the following four (4) staple food groups, with at least five (5) varieties of perishable food in the first category and at least two (2) varieties of perishable food in all subsequent categories:

- (1) Vegetables and/or fruits.
- (2) Meat, poultry, fish, and/or vegetable proteins.

²⁴ For more information covering food initiatives in Shreveport and surrounding areas, see <http://www.crcworks.org/arklatex16.pdf>

- (3) Bread and/or cereal.
- (4) Dairy products and/or substitutes.”

While the ordinance applied to all groceries, it was clearly directed at corner stores, since most full-service groceries already complied. The action was requested by residents and nonprofits, and health department officials pursued this strategy in order to increase food access. Yet the political spearhead of the effort was the city’s Licensing Department, which viewed this as a crime-prevention strategy. Officially, this was considered a way of reducing crime by improving the appearance of storefronts, with the hope that new staple food offerings would also expand the customer base, keeping more “eyes on the street.” Privately, one key City Council sponsor of the ordinance (Schiff, 2009) stated that the core motivation for adopting the ordinance was to place cameras into corner stores to track drug dealing and other criminal activity. When Meter spoke with nonprofit leaders who had initially pressed for the Ordinance, they were not aware of this priority.

The program was based on the premise that vesting enforcement powers in the Licensing Department would be less intrusive to store owners than other approaches. Emphasis was placed on education and building compliance over time. In the Ordinance’s first year, 47 violations were documented. Follow-up inspections showed that “stores were generally in compliance,” but health official Aliyah Ali added, compliance was not the same as offering “super awesome produce.” Over time, inspectors found that corner store owners needed additional support in order to fully comply, she added.

When Health Department officials performed a follow-up assessment in one low-income neighborhood that is especially stressed financially, they found that 72% of the 35 corner stores they surveyed visually were not in compliance with the produce component of the Ordinance. They found that 34% of the corner stores they viewed did not carry any produce, while those that did tended to carry onions, potatoes, bananas, lemons, and/or limes. Fresh items that were available were often found at the bottom of display cases, not highly visible to shoppers.

Officials performing the assessment further interviewed 22 corner store owners. Of these, only 12 (55%) said they were aware of the Ordinance. Most said that their customers rarely come to their stores to purchase fresh items such as milk, eggs, and produce. Researchers concluded that owners required assistance in several arenas: sourcing fresh foods, building attractive displays, offering promotional materials, handling fresh food items safely, and loans to upgrade equipment.

Residents who were then surveyed as part of the Northside Healthy Eating Project said they were unimpressed by the produce offerings at the corner stores. They said quality was low, no longer fresh, and items were expensive. Residents added that they prefer fresh items to canned or frozen. Researchers also found that 40% of those surveyed had access to a vehicle.

Evaluating the success of the Ordinance, city staff then examined the experiences of other cities that had introduced similar efforts. They learned that the more successful programs had several common elements: (a) each began with a detailed assessment of each store, (b) stores were assisted in procuring affordable produce, (c) stores were assisted in setting prices and creating more appealing signage; (d) stores were assisted in making interior and exterior improvements; and each initiative included (e) community engagement efforts.

This led to a shift in the emphasis of the project from enforcement to engagement: now, stores were to be assisted in “making fresh produce and healthy foods visible, affordable, and attractive to neighborhood residents,” Ali said.

Thus, the City decided to focus on working more closely with 10 corner store owners who expressed strong interest in making healthy foods more available, rather than trying to punish those who did not. These partner stores agreed to (a) increase fresh produce offerings; (b) display Healthy Corner Store marketing materials in their stores; (c) document sales of fresh foods and share the data with city officials; and (d) attend a produce handling training.

The city sent out invitations to 90 corner stores to participate. Of those, 15 expressed interest, and 10 were selected. A local commercial produce distributor was identified who was willing to work with store owners to source a standard list of products without charging for distribution. Further, each store was given a \$200 credit once they placed their first produce order. Community tasting events helped raise visibility of the program, and high school youth were engaged to help with outreach.

One review of the initiative stated that the city issued only three citations (out of 364 stores) for non-compliance during 2011 (Scott, 2012). Yet this may also reflect the fact that city officials had shifted the program’s emphasis away from enforcement.

Early impacts were humble. A journalist for the local daily newspaper found that in early 2014, corner stores were on average selling only \$10 of produce each week (Rao, 2014). Moreover, many of the stores where the city wished to focus attention were so close to large chain stores they were unlikely to be able to compete in pricing. “Half of the 10 stores that will be in the next round of the program are a half-mile or less from such chains,” the report concluded. Corner store owners, the report concluded, “frequently buy produce from bigger grocery chains, rather than more cheaply from wholesalers, because they purchase in small quantities to ensure it will not go bad.” These findings offered a significant caution as to whether better offerings at corner stores had actually improved access for low-income residents.

The *Star Tribune* also cited a health official’s review of the program, who stated that more intensive involvement with store owners would be key to its success. “ ‘It’s really not enough to just put in a basket of apples and oranges at the front register and call it done and say, “Great, the city was here,” ’ said Nora Hoeft, a public health specialist for Minneapolis.”

The article said that corner store owners “Usually do not make money on fruits and vegetables, but like the idea of working with the city and finding new ways to draw in customers.” At the time, the cost of the program was estimated to be \$29,000, largely drawing upon state grants through the State Health Improvement Program (SHIP).

The original Ordinance was amended by the Minneapolis City Council in October, 2014 in order to provide more clear and comprehensive standards for retailers. This expanded the list of food items that must be available for any grocery store accepting SNAP benefits to be licensed by the City. The revised Ordinance also exempts certain stores such as small convenience stores linked to gas stations of less than 300 square feet of retail space, central business district stores, and those offering food as an accessory item.

The revised Ordinance requires that “All grocery stores licensed under this chapter [that is, those accepting SNAP benefits] must offer for sale food for home preparation and consumption, on a continuous basis.” Current requirements are listed below, where the full Ordinance is printed. The City says these are based on WIC standards, though more flexible (Minneapolis Department of Health 2017). Noncompliant stores are subject to a \$200 fine. Enforcement began on April 1, 2016, after a year’s grace period in which inspectors offered resources and trainings to noncompliant license holders.

Perhaps the most significant shift in the new policy was to expand attention to most grocery stores in the city, not simply corner stores, and to engage Department of Health inspectors so that health became the priority, rather than crime.

The department performed its own evaluation of the revised ordinance in 2016 (Minneapolis Department of Health, 2017). This assessment found that of the total of 326 licensed stores in the city, 79 were exempt. Six corner stores and one food discount store had closed, so 240 stores were subject to enforcement. Of these, 151 (63%) were fully compliant. Of the ten categories of food items that were required, 232 stores (97%) carried at least six.

The city’s 29 supermarkets and 4 big box stores were fully compliant. Corner store compliance had improved, with 72% of the city’s corner stores fully compliant with the revised ordinance — a clear sign that education and persistent nudging had made a difference. This was an increase of 8% over the 64% compliance by corner stores measured a year earlier. Kristen Klingler, who oversees the program for the Department of Health, told our team that “I was a little surprised last year when we looked at the results. It was good to see that the corner stores were doing quite well” (Klingler, 2017).

Stores that lagged in compliance were food stores attached to gas stations (38% compliant), pharmacies (12%), and food discount stores (11%). The assessment attributed this shortfall to corporate ownership that meant purchasing decisions were often made in distant locations. Klingler said that some firms asked for more time to comply since changing their procedures took time. One chain with four stores, she added, decided to opt out of SNAP altogether rather than complying with the law. She felt this would not diminish access for low-income customers too much because these stores were all within walking distance of a supermarket that was compliant. Another chain indicated that they were likely to simply pay the \$200 fine as small cost of doing business, and do not intend to comply since it does not fit their business model.

The assessment further found that the Ordinance had not fully realized its goal of ensuring broad access to fresh produce. The category of food least likely to be carried in full compliance was fruits and vegetables, with 83% of stores compliant. This represented a 15% increase over the 68% compliance tracked a year earlier. Other low-cost staples such as whole grains (86%) and dried beans, peas, and lentils (87%) were also among the lowest. Food categories most likely to be carried in full compliance were milk and eggs (98% each).

Perhaps due to the close attention city officials had paid, corner stores had placed a greater priority on carrying fruits and vegetables than other stores (94% of corner stores were compliant) and dried pulses (98%). The lowest rate of compliance for corner stores involved

whole grains (90%), cheese (90%), and juice (88%). In this latter category, compliance in carrying juice had actually decreased.

The department's assessment further noted that in general, fines are "slow to happen because standard enforcement procedures involve a series of warnings and re-inspections before a fine is issued, if it is issued at all (health inspectors can use their discretion when deciding to issue fines)." Indeed, Klingler noted that there have been no fines to date, because assessing fines is a prolonged process, and is only applied when violations are considered critical. Failing to carry staple foods is not viewed as a critical violation, so it appears that few fines will be levied. Klingler said that in late 2017, her staff will visit 30-35 stores in coordination with health inspectors, attempting to bolster enforcement.

The report also recommended that the City intervene early when a new grocery store is being planned, or a major renovation performed, since the City holds considerable power under this Ordinance to require a new store to have proper facilities for carrying all required food items if the store seeks to accept SNAP benefits.

Importantly, the assessment also noted that "customer demand for these items is still low despite significant interest in and requests for healthier foods at neighborhood stores." It recommended expanding marketing and outreach efforts.

A map of all grocery stores showing compliance is linked from the City web site (City of Minneapolis, series). That map shows that whether a store is compliant or noncompliant has little to do with their proximity to low-income areas; many in more prosperous communities are noncompliant. The experience of city officials is that those stores that are most responsive to community needs are those that will comply.

Klingler added that she has been pleased with the quality of the produce offered at stores. "It's not perfect, but for the most part it is pretty good." Now her department, informed by community leaders who say they still want better food options, is exploring ways to foster stronger demand for healthy foods among low-income shoppers.

She felt there were four main successes of the Minneapolis initiative: (1) It was responsive to strong community interest that had packed the City Council meeting when the 2014 Ordinance was being considered. It passed unanimously. (2) University of Minnesota researchers are performing an intensive evaluation of the initiative, including tracking actual purchases by low-income customers and sampling what foods they have in their homes, as well as interviewing store managers. Klingler felt this partnership has been especially positive. (3) Since the policy created opportunities rather than restricting sales of any specific products, it was less controversial. (4) a new distribution firm, Brightside Produce, was formed by the University of St. Thomas. This firm engages students in delivering produce directly to corner stores with no minimum purchase, nor advance orders, required. Stores can simply select from the truck the items they wish to carry. Produce items are supplied by a local distribution firm. The City's partnership with this firm counts as an important success, Klingler added. Brightside aims to work with some of the less compliant firms to increase their staple food offerings.

She cautioned, however, that the Ordinance is only one part of a much larger set of initiatives that are targeted at systems change. "The Staple Foods Ordinance is only one piece of the

puzzle. It has to be surrounded by many other initiatives.” She added that the initiative has become more closely focused, and also less costly, over time, in part because “working one-on-one with a small number of corner stores was resource- and time-intensive. We did not have the capacity to continue that over time.” She is pleased that time invested in the early phases appears to have reaped lasting interest from corner store owners.

Klingler’s advice for another city that might consider adapting such an ordinance to their unique context was three fold: (1) Bring on regulatory staff early in the process, so they can help design the ordinance and help make the enforcement practical. If they have weighed in on the regulations, she added, they would be more likely to enforce them. (2) Engage business owners in shaping the Ordinance. In Minneapolis, this increased their knowledge of the regulations, and their interest in complying. (3) Phase in enforcement over time, with ample opportunity for training on the front end. This was appealing to both businesses and elected officials.

Summary. The patient, deliberate, and holistic nature of this effort is exemplary, along with its attention to low-income consumers as well as to stores. The revised law sets out clear standards for compliance. By following up the policy action with dedicated evaluation, the initiative has been able to improve steadily over time, and has left excellent documentation of its strengths and weaknesses.

Perhaps the largest success of this effort is the way it has engaged public officials and select businesses in implementing a long-term vision focused on those with the greatest need, in a comprehensive manner. This allowed project leaders to broaden the scope from enforcement to engagement, and allowed low-income access to remain a clear priority.

When the Ordinance was revised in 2014, more stores were engaged, and also resulted in higher compliance rates than the original Ordinance focusing on corner stores, since many supermarket chains were already compliant.

Still, engaging stores in offering produce has proven easier than engaging low-income residents in committing to purchase, and results are mixed. Project leaders are clear in stating that simply opening up access in stores is not sufficient in itself, but does constitute a strong step in the proper direction.

It is further important to note that this policy action emerged from long-term civic action. Minneapolis has held strong neighborhood identities historically, and neighborhood groups received funding to promulgate community planning visions through both Model Cities and the city’s innovative Neighborhood Revitalization Program. Millions have been invested in community capacity building in low-income neighborhoods as well as others. All of this helped create a rich climate of civic engagement backed by public investment.

Close attention to increasing healthier food options began in 1969 as residents of low-income neighborhoods began collaborating with farmers to create better shopping options (Meter, 2009). This has resulted in Minneapolis hosting the largest group of cooperative grocery stores in the U.S. (Hodgson, 2015). These have built strong partnerships with and helped foster the growth of family farms as far as four hours from the city for decades.

The food effort also grew out of, and amplified, a prior City initiative to promote sustainability, which took a holistic view and required specific measures of success to be reported by each City agency (Meter, 2004; City of Minneapolis web site; Hodgson, 2015).

Growing Food Connections underscores that the Staple Foods Ordinance was only one element in a multi-faceted approach to addressing food issues known as Homegrown Minneapolis, launched by the Mayor and his wife in 2008 (Hodgson, 2015). This has resulted in a cluster of policies including a food policy council, refined planning and business codes, and an Urban Agriculture Policy Plan.

Minneapolis Ordinance: CHAPTER 203. - GROCERY STORES^[11]

• 203.05. - Findings.

• The council finds that it is in the interest of the public health, safety and welfare to ensure that grocery stores in the City of Minneapolis provide a certain minimum level of healthy food. (2014-Or-092, § 2, 10-31-14)

• 203.10. - Definitions.

• As used in this chapter, the following words and phrases shall mean:

Accessory food items. Non-staple food items, such as coffee, tea, cocoa, carbonated and un-carbonated drinks, candy, condiments, and spices.

Accessory use grocery. A retail establishment that sells staple foods as an accessory use to its primary business, or sells only specialized types or classes of staple foods and accessory foods, including, but not limited to, such establishments as imported food stores and gift shops. The definition of accessory use grocery does not include stores that accept government supplemental nutrition programs.

Grocery store. A retail establishment that sells such products as staple foods, accessory food items, and household goods.

Staple foods. Those food items intended for home preparation and consumption, including meat, poultry, fish, bread, and breadstuffs, cereals, vegetables, fruits, fruit and vegetable juices, and dairy products. All grocery stores licensed under this chapter must offer for sale food for home preparation and consumption, on a continuous basis. The following items and quantities are required:

- (a) Milk: Five (5) gallons of unsweetened, unflavored, fluid cow's milk in up to a gallon or half-gallon containers in any combination of at least two (2) of the following varieties: skim or nonfat, one (1) percent, or two (2) percent, or "plain" or "original" soy milk or other milk alternatives.

(b) Cheese: Six (6) pounds of cheese in packages of at least one-half (½) pound (eight (8) ounces) each, in any combination of at least three (3) varieties, not including processed cheese products.

(c) Eggs: Six (6) one dozen (twelve (12)) containers of fresh large-size eggs.

(d) Meat and vegetable protein sources: At least three (3) varieties of meat, poultry, canned fish packed in water, or vegetable proteins such as nut butter and/or tofu. Nut butters can be up to eighteen (18) ounces in size and are not to contain any other food product such as jelly, jam, chocolate or honey.

(e) Fruits and vegetables: Thirty (30) pounds or fifty (50) items total of fresh and/or frozen fruits and vegetables that do not contain added ingredients including sweeteners, salt, sauces, or seasonings, in at least seven (7) varieties, with at least five (5) varieties that are fresh and perishable, and with no more than fifty (50) percent of the total selection being from a single variety.

(f) Juice: Six (6) containers of any combination of the following, as long as at least two (2) containers are one hundred (100) percent citrus juice, (orange, grapefruit or orange/grapefruit) in any combination of the following types:

(1) Eleven and one-half (11½) to twelve (12) ounce containers of pure and unsweetened frozen or non-frozen concentrate one hundred (100) percent juice; or

(2) Fifty-nine (59) ounce or larger containers of pure and unsweetened one hundred (100) percent juice.

(g) Whole grain cereal: Four (4) boxes or bags twelve (12) ounces or larger of whole grain cereal or cereal grains in any combination of at least three (3) varieties.

(h) Whole grains: Five (5) pounds of whole grains of at least three (3) varieties such as bread, corn tortillas, brown rice or oatmeal.

(i) Canned beans: One hundred ninety-two (192) ounces of canned beans or legumes in any combination of at least three (3) varieties.

(j) Dried peas, beans, lentils: Four (4) packages, up to sixteen (16) ounces in size, of dried beans, peas or lentils without any added ingredients. (96-Or-005, § 1, 2-9-96; 2008-Or-015, § 1, 2-29-08; 2009-Or-185, § 1, 12-4-09; 2014-Or-092, § 3, 10-31-14)

• **203.20. - Requirements.**

• Grocery stores and accessory use grocery stores are subject to the requirements of [chapter 188](#). A grocery store that does not possess a grocery license as of February 9, 1996 must meet the requirements of subsection (a). All grocery stores licensed under this chapter except those exempted pursuant to [section 203.30](#) must meet the requirements of subsection (b).

(a) All grocery stores not located on a commercial corridor shall provide and maintain a sales floor area of two thousand (2,000) square feet unless granted a waiver by the city council.

(b) All grocery stores licensed under this chapter must offer for sale food for home preparation and consumption on a continuous basis staple foods as defined in [section 203.10](#). Food shall be non-expired or spoiled and maintained according to established industry standards for food safety. To count towards the staple food standards perishable items, including fresh fruits and vegetables, shall be offered in good condition, not overripe or seriously deformed and free from decay, discoloration, bruising and surface damage. (96-Or-005, § 1, 2-9-96; 2008-Or-015, § 2, 2-29-08; 2009-Or-185, § 2, 12-4-09; 2014-Or-092, § 4, 10-31-14; 2014-Or-126, § 1, 12-12-14)

• **203.30. - Exemptions.**

The following are exempt from the requirements of sections [203.20\(a\)](#) and [203.20\(b\)](#):

(a) Accessory use groceries.

(b) Gasoline filling stations, licensed under [Chapter 287](#) of this Code, and having not more than three hundred (300) square feet of retail sales floor area.

(c) Grocery stores located in the central commercial district, as defined in [section 360.10](#).

Additionally, a grocery store located in a shopping center as defined in [section 520.160](#) is exempt from the requirements of [section 203.20\(a\)](#). (96-Or-005, § 1, 2-9-96; 2008-Or-015, § 3, 2-29-08; 2009-Or-185, § 3, 12-4-09; 2014-Or-092, § 5, 10-31-14; 2014-Or-126, § 2, 12-12-14)

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Media coverage:

BrightSide Produce offers new hope for 'food deserts'

At BrightSide Produce, college students and local teenagers team up to deliver fresh produce, at discount prices, to corner stores in low-income neighborhoods.

By [Maura Lerner](#) Star Tribune
August 13, 2017

Khaled “Mike” Azem admits he was skeptical at first. Why, he wondered, would anyone expect him to stock a lot of fruit and vegetables in a convenience store that sells mostly chips and snacks? “Come on,” he said, “who’s going to buy grapes from me?”

But now Azem, who owns the Fremont Market in north Minneapolis, displays baskets of peaches, apples and bananas on the front counter, right next to the candy. He also hosts a sidewalk farm stand, selling avocados, tomatoes, zucchini and other produce every week throughout the summer.

For Azem, fruit and veggies may not be big moneymakers. But he credits an unusual business venture, run largely by students at the University of St. Thomas, with helping to make all this bounty available to his customers.

At [BrightSide Produce](#), college students and local teenagers team up to deliver fresh produce, at discount prices, to corner stores like Azem's in low-income neighborhoods.

Since its founding in 2014, BrightSide has attracted national attention for its unconventional — some would say groundbreaking — business model, which turned what is often a money-losing proposition into a thriving enterprise.

"I'm prone to a bit of hyperbole," says Adam Kay, a St. Thomas biology professor, who is one of the co-founders. But he believes he and his team have created the first "economically sustainable" solution to a nationwide problem.

Woodberry reached over Herrli as he weighed a bunch of bananas for a buyer. "We've had people tell us we're a godsend," Herrli said.

For years, experts have agonized over urban "food deserts," where groceries and healthful food options are scarce. Typically, says Kay, the corner stores that dominate poor neighborhoods don't sell much produce — and have to charge more when they do — because they can't meet the minimum orders required by wholesalers. So there's no financial incentive to change.

But with BrightSide, store owners can order as little as they want and still get a break on costs. BrightSide buys in bulk and supplies fruit and vegetables to some two dozen convenience stores in low-income neighborhoods. Then it sells whatever is left — at a small profit — to a group of customers back on campus.

Last year, says Kay, more than 100 faculty members, staff and students at St. Thomas and nearby St. Catherine University joined BrightSide's "buyer's club" to support the enterprise. Each member pays up to \$10 a week for a share of the unsold merchandise, which is delivered to drop-off points on the St. Paul campuses.

The buyer's club was the key that "makes this whole program work," Kay said. It brings in enough extra money to cover expenses and has widespread appeal. "You're not just buying fruit and vegetables from us," Kay said. "You're participating in this movement."

The concept was so innovative that it was named a finalist in the 2015 Aspen Ideas Festival, an international competition.

In north Minneapolis, where BrightSide partners with some stores to run sidewalk farm stands, the reaction can be effusive.

“This is like a dream,” said Reality Tisdale, who lives near the Fremont Market, as she scanned a colorful display of mangoes, peppers, watermelon and other produce outside the store. It was quite a surprise, she said, and exactly what her neighborhood needs.

“We’ve had people tell us we’re a godsend,” said Nicole Herrli, a St. Thomas student and BrightSide’s business manager. “Even if they don’t buy anything, it’s like, ‘This is beautiful, keep it up.’”

Iana Castro, a marketing professor at San Diego State University, was so impressed that she decided to open a branch of BrightSide in California this summer.

“I think it could be huge,” said Castro, who has studied the food-desert phenomenon. There have been many attempts to address the problem by government agencies and others, she said. But what makes BrightSide stand out is that it pays for itself.

“These multiple income streams, and the fact that students were in charge, made it actually feasible to have this be a self-sustaining venture,” she said.

Now she’s putting it to the test in San Diego, where BrightSide launched in five stores in June, and will open a buyer’s club on campus this fall. “I really believe,” she said, “that this model can make a lot of difference.”

So far, BrightSide is still a modest operation — it sells only about \$40,000 worth of produce a year in the Twin Cities, according to Kay, co-director of the project. And it relies heavily on a volunteer workforce, including a small army of St. Thomas students and two Twin Cities teenagers, Demetria Fuller and Adam Pruitt, who were among the founders of BrightSide.

But Kay and his colleagues say they’re optimistic that their fledgling enterprise could have a much bigger effect before long.

“We’re just scratching the surface of who we can get involved in this,” Kay said. Already, he’s had conversations with interested churches, and he’s had requests from people off campus who want to join the buyer’s club.

“We’ve had to say we can’t do it; we don’t have the capacity,” Kay said. But he hopes that will change.

In the meantime, he said, the number of participating stores has grown, and “this year sales have really started to go up.” That’s especially good news for store owners like Azem, who may have been skeptical about the demand for fresh fruit and vegetables. Says Kay: “There’s also this idea of, ‘If you build it, they will come.’ You can create demand.”

He also takes heart from a recent story about a woman with a cane who made her way to one of BrightSide’s farm stands, marveling at the fresh kale. “She said she hadn’t had fresh vegetables in months until that stand was here,” Kay said. “How many stories like that do we need to start feeling like we’re doing the right thing?”

<http://www.startribune.com/brightside-produce-offers-new-hope-for-food-deserts/440223823/>

Food Hub Feasibility Study: Northeast Kansas

Using funding from USDA Rural Development and the Kansas Health Foundation, the Douglas County Food Policy Council in Lawrence commissioned a feasibility analysis from the SCALE firm to explore the potential for creating a food hub in Northeast Kansas (Flaccavento, *et al.*, 2014). Work on this project was coordinated with a similar effort centered upon the Greater Kansas City region, performed by New Ventures Associates (Nyquist, *et al.*, 2014) (BNIM, 2014). Since the two studies overlap considerably, only the Northeast report is covered here.

While the SCALE consulting team felt that building a food hub was a feasible goal, they cautioned that there was a limited supply of fresh produce that could be sold in the Northeast region. Further, they suggested that the best way to form such a hub would be through a collaboration of farmers, so that farmers would manage the effort based on their own self-interest, and their existing connections with customers would not be compromised. Consultants also pointed out that the “food hub itself is not the goal, but a tool towards a stronger regional food system.”

The consulting teams interviewed about two dozen farmers individually, and surveyed another 196 farmers within 250 miles of Kansas City, Missouri. Of these, 96 farmers from the Northeast region responded. About 61% of those who responded said they raise vegetables. Over 83% of the farms that raise vegetables said they devote 10 acres or less to these crops. Researchers concluded that a small core (5) of “anchor farmers” already existed, that “could help provide a solid foundation of produce for a food hub.” These farmers were farming a combined total of about 35 – 40 acres, and had the potential to expand production.

Notably, consultants could not locate larger farms that wished to produce for local markets. “SCALE was unable to identify any larger, more traditional (corn and soybean, livestock) farmers interested in producing fruit and vegetables for a food hub, as part of a farm diversification strategy.” This is typical of similar studies across the U.S.

Producers identified three main concerns: (a) whether a food hub would pay prices high enough for them to sustain their farm operations; (b) whether the risks of joining a collaboration, including the investment required, would be rewarded with stable markets; and (c) whether they could find labor to perform necessary chores, and money to pay these laborers adequately.

All told, 78 buyers in the Northeast region reported that there was a total of \$787,500 of current market demand for produce through existing market channels. This was not viewed as enough to support the operations of a full-scale food hub. Yet consultants estimated that the produce market could be expanded to \$2.4 million after five years. SCALE’s projections assumed that 15-25 farms farming 60 to 100 acres of produce would be required to meet these targets, double the now identified as ready. SCALE also assumed that buyers would pay prices higher than current wholesale market prices, although it is not spelled out how this would happen. Yet even with such growth in demand, the report estimated that a potential food hub would require \$617,242 of subsidies in its first five years of operation, and would not have a positive cash flow after five years.

Consultants also suggested that if such a hub were to carry high-value items such as meat, eggs, and cheeses, it could tap more lucrative markets. They added that this strategy would also involve somewhat higher costs of operation. Financial projections for this approach were not devised for this report.

Yet perhaps the most critical gap in the region's food system was a lack of infrastructure to carry food grown by local farms to markets. Notably lacking, SCALE said, was "a central site for aggregat[ing], cooling, and packing produce," as well as meat-processing capacity. Consultants further recommended developing sub-aggregation points, where produce from nearby farms could be combined onto pallets for wholesale delivery. One of these sites was Hiawatha Thriftway, a grocery store in Hiawatha that had offered use of its storage space. Yet this store appears to have closed in July, 2015. A second sub-aggregation site was proposed near Manhattan.

The report also listed several specific food businesses in the region that seemed to be prime candidates for participating in constructing a local food system.

Overall, SCALE recommended that a lead organization be named to coordinate the early stages of development for the food hub initiative. This, in turn, would assist a group of farmers to form a Producers Network, draft action plans, create a regional brand, and find funding for the effort.

Conclusions:

The SCALE report is a sober look at the potential financial realities of forming a food hub, one that properly places a priority on building a local food system, and asking whether constructing a food hub is the most logical step to take to advance that purpose.

Although the report included input from within a 250-mile radius around the Kansas City metro area, the heart of the potential for a regional farmer collaboration is far more localized. SCALE names specific concentrations of food activity in both Lawrence and Kansas City, Kansas.

The Lawrence region supports a cluster of pioneering growers, some of whom have 40 years' experience in raising food for nearby customers, often won at a time when there was limited consumer interest in local foods. These farmers have grown businesses slowly, step-by-step, forming loyalties with neighbors who continued to purchase their products. Without this patient process of community building, it is unlikely that Douglas County would have such a solid core of growers today. While SCALE recognized the strength of the core of growers near Lawrence, and called for networking among a wider circle of producers, it did not emphasize the importance of continuing this slow networking in building a foundation for a food hub.

There are also two significant shortcomings in the report. First, the economic impact assessments made by the SCALE team are not valid, since they rely upon data sets that are not responsive to local food trade (Meter and Goldenberg, 2015) (Thilmany McFadden, *et al.*, 2016).

Second, the SCALE report gave limited attention to the need for farm-level infrastructure for washing, packing, and cooling produce in order to maintain top quality produce and ensure farmers can make market choices from a position of strength. To its credit, SCALE mentioned one farm that processes poultry on the farm. Yet the broader need for such infrastructure,

highlighted in a prior report that was introduced to the SCALE team (Meter and Goldenberg, 2013), was overlooked.

Our team's research focused on how the SCALE report would help frame a vision for Wyandotte County. SCALE offers some useful information, yet its applicability is limited by the fact it provided sparse treatment of urban agriculture in Kansas City, Kansas, and because the buyers who responded to the SCALE survey tended to be located in more prosperous communities. Since the financial estimates for local produce sales were based on above-market wholesale purchasing, it is difficult to see how low-income consumers would be served by such a food hub. Further, while existing locally managed firms in KCK might be part of constructing a local food system, these firms were not specifically named in the SCALE study. It is quite possible that these firms chose not to respond to the survey.

SCALE's calculations of the potential supply and demand for local food, combined with data we compiled, show that KCK itself has the potential to martial nearly as much production as the entire Northeast region currently supports, although of course it is currently behind Lawrence. As of 2016, Cultivate Kansas City had sales of roughly \$140,000, about 18% of the produce market identified for the Northeast region covered by the SCALE report. Another farm located in KCK told our team it had donated 75,000 pounds of peaches to local organizations, in addition to produce sales they made. Between the Gibbs Road Farm, Juniper Gardens, and J-14 Agricultural Enterprises something like 18.5 acres are now under cultivation within the city. This is more than half of the acreage identified as available within the larger region by the SCALE study. UG officials told us that the city has more than 2,400 vacant parcels of land, with the county holding another 19,307 acres of agriculturally zoned land (Flanders, 2017). This means that achieving the 30-40 acres of production proposed as a starting point for a Northeast Kansas food hub could be accomplished over time within KCK itself, given sufficient investment and political will.

In so doing, Wyandotte County will face significant challenges, since resident spending power is limited, yet this also creates a tremendous advantage for the county — it is able to build a food system, using food produced within city limits, that is sold directly to low-income residents. This could make the city a national pioneer in providing food access, and in creating an urban amenity that attracts and retains a stable population of people who value healthy eating and lifestyles, and advances decades of prior work that has been invested by KCK residents.

The SCALE report is a reminder that local markets are developed slowly, although this theme is not emphasized in the report. The centers upon which the proposed food hub would be constructed are all examples of networks that have been built patiently over time, and SCALE proposes that the most important network to build first is among producers.

Wyandotte County has most all of the resources required to build its own local food trade, even though resident spending power is limited. It would do so by patiently building networks that connect local farms with local residents, investing as needed to support new initiatives that are not ready to pay their own way. Since farmer training is an accomplished capacity in KCK, and new farmers are ready to step into new roles, KCK is ahead of hundreds of cities that lack these capacities.

As in the case of Northeast Kansas, new infrastructure will be required, and KCK is uniquely positioned to build infrastructure that connects urban farms with urban consumers. Moreover,

the SCALE study documents that even relatively small acreage — the kind that can be assembled by paying attention to scattered vacant lots — can be the foundation for building a strong community-based food system for decades to come.

The Kansas City Food Hub

Although not based in the Northeast Kansas region, the Kansas City Food Hub grew out of the SCALE and NVA studies. A journalist's coverage of the hub, Farm Fresh HQ, found that the hub earned \$124,000 of total income in 2016 (Jones, 2017), although it did not specify whether this was all earned from product sales. While this is well below SCALE's projections for the Northeast region, and this hub draws upon a 100-mile radius around Kansas City, Missouri, it is nonetheless a solid start.

The KC Food Hub followed SCALE's recommendations that a grower collaboration be formed, and appears to have incorporated itself as a cooperative. The web site lists 9 member farmers, listed below. These farms are located in both states, and several are in Douglas County, as expected. The Lawrence Journal-World reported that each of these farms has the capacity to produce food year-round, since each has a hoophouse or greenhouse or other season extension device. Through the co-op they have been able to reduce some input costs, for example by purchasing boxes in bulk.

Distribution is somewhat more localized than first imagined. Then operations-manager Wayne Parks was quoted in the article as saying, "We solely focus on the KC metro area. Anything else is unaffordable because of transportation cost." He added, however, that the co-op sells to the Merc Co-op in Lawrence. Parks' web site indicates he is now the operations manager for a church in Leavenworth, having left the co-op at the end of April.

Rather than having a single collection point where produce is aggregated, Farm Fresh HQ has established two "sub-hubs" on member farms, where product can be aggregated for shipping into Kansas City, Missouri. Key customers served in 2016 included Hallmark's Crown Room Cafeteria and the distributor, U.S. Foods, Parks told the newspaper. This suggests that even on the buying side, previously established networks (in this case within single corporate structures rather than based in communities) was key to launching the food hub business.

Parks added that he had hoped to add poultry and meat production in 2017. Our team was not able to make direct contact with current staff at Farm Fresh HQ.

Farmer members of Farm Fresh HQ, as listed on FFHQ web site August 10, 2017

Tom Buller, President
Common Harvest Farms &
Moon on the Meadow Farm
Lawrence, Kansas

Kathryn (Ami) Zumalt, Vice President
Red Ridge Farms
Odessa, Missouri

Katie Nixon, Secretary
Green Gate Family Farm
Wheatland, Missouri

County Line Produce
El Dorado, Missouri
Amish Farm

Austin Reynolds & John Edmonds
Green Thumbs Up
Leavenworth, Kansas

Jill Elmers
Moon on the Meadow &
Common Harvest Farms
Lawrence, Kansas

Jim Leek
Pat & Rachel's Gardens
Olathe, Kansas
Also a Certified Organic processor — washing, dicing and freezing their own produce for distributors and local businesses.

Nathan and Erin Moyer
Moyer Farms
Richmond, Missouri

Jacob Thomas
Jet Produce and Meats
Lawrence, Kansas

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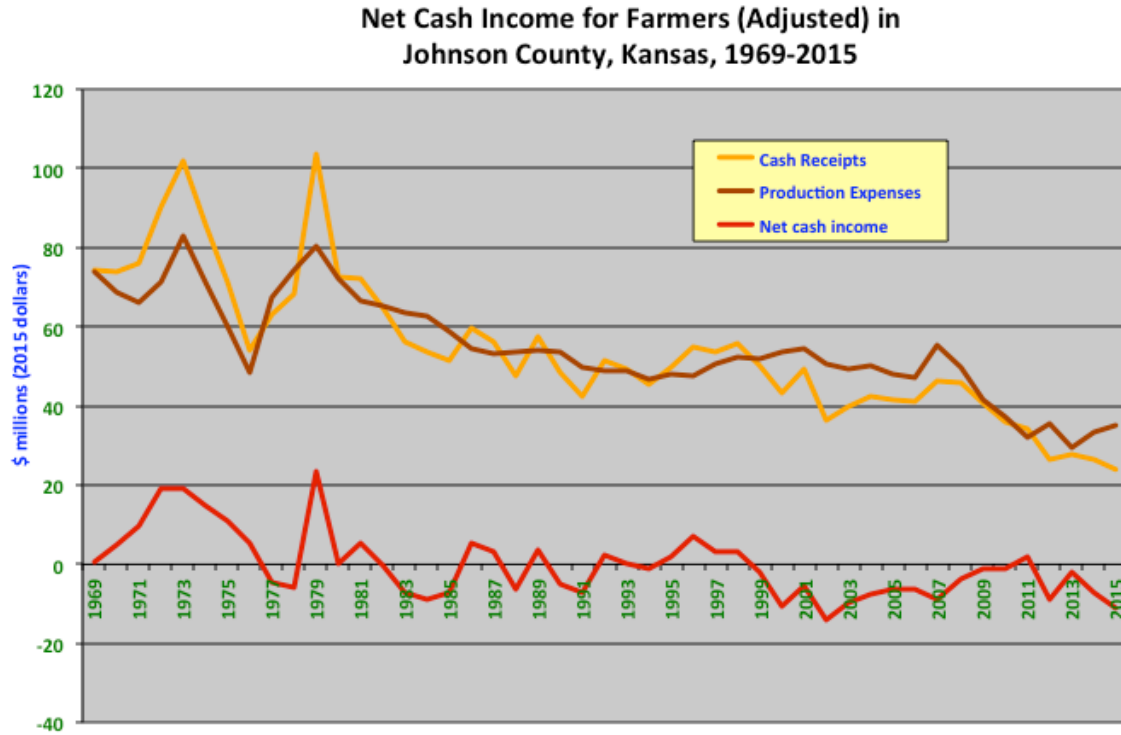
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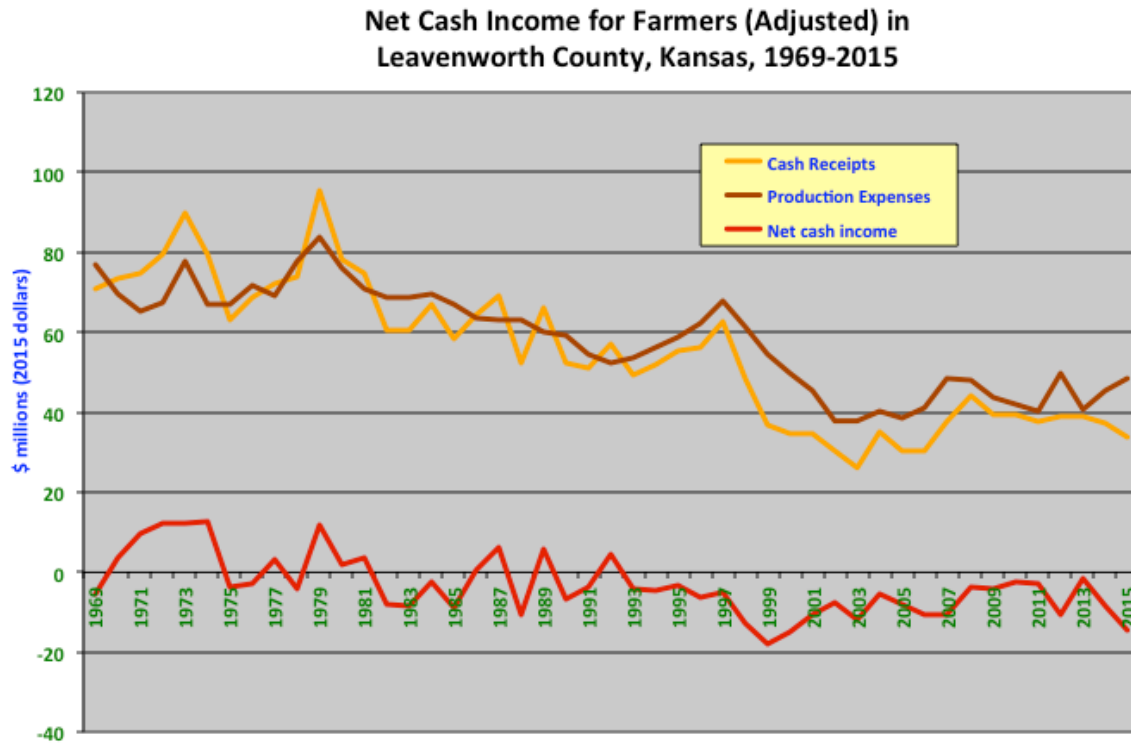
Appendix N: Farm Income by County

Chart 11: Adjusted Net Cash Income for Johnson County farms, 1969 - 2015



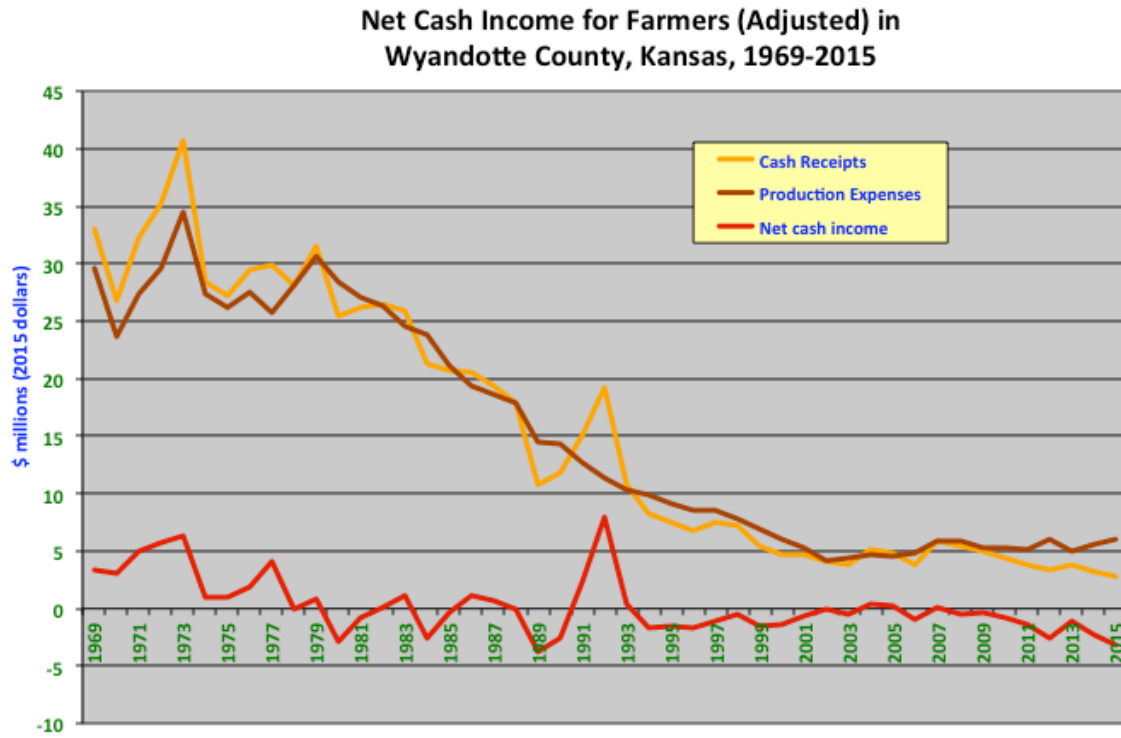
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

Chart 12: Adjusted Net Cash Income for Leavenworth County farms, 1969 - 2015



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

Chart 13: Adjusted Net Cash Income for Wyandotte County farms, 1969 - 2015



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

Appendix O: Census of Agriculture County Highlights

Wyandotte County KS highlights (Census of Agriculture, 2012):

- 164 farms, 14% less than in 2007.
- Wyandotte County has 12,009 acres of land in farms.
- Farmers sold \$3.3 million of products in 2012.
- \$2.7 million (81%) of these sales were crops.
- \$586,000 (19%) of these sales were livestock.
- The most prevalent farm size is 10 to 49 acres, with 86 farms (52.4%) in this category.
- The next most prevalent is 50 to 179 acres, with 41 (25%) farms.
- 2 farms (1.2%) are 1,000 acres or more.
- 116 farms (70.7%) are less than 50 acres.
- 127 farms (77.4%) sold less than \$10,000 in farm products.
- 5 farms (3%) sold more than \$100,000 in farm products.
- 16 farms sold \$161,000 of food directly to consumers. This is an 11-farm decrease, and a 38.5% decrease in direct sales from 2007 sales of \$262,000.
- Direct sales were 4.9% of farm product sales, which is greater than the national average of 0.3%.

Johnson County KS highlights (Census of Agriculture, 2012):

- 571 farms, 6% less than in 2007.
- Johnson County has 99,354 acres of land in farms.
- Farmers sold \$24.4 million of products in 2012.
- \$16 million (65.6%) of these sales were crops.
- \$8.3 million (34%) of these sales were livestock.
- The most prevalent farm size is 10 to 49 acres, with 243 farms (42.6%) in this category.
- The next most prevalent is 50 to 179 acres, with 167 (29.2%) farms.
- 26 farms (4.5%) are 1,000 acres or more.
- 297 farms (52%) are less than 50 acres.
- 376 farms (66%) sold less than \$10,000 in farm products.
- 53 farms (9.3%) sold more than \$100,000 in farm products.
- The county ranks 7th of 105 counties in the state for inventory of horses and ponies, with 1,843
- Johnson County ranks 3rd of 73 counties in the state for inventory of bee colonies, with 691
- Johnson County ranks 8th in the state of 59 counties in sales of fruits, tree nuts, and berries, with \$133,000
- The County ranks 3rd of 72 counties in the state in sales of nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod with \$5.6 million

- The County ranks 2nd of 25 counties in the state in the sale of Christmas trees and short rotation woody crops with \$21,000 in sales
- The County ranks 9th of 104 counties in the state in sales of horses, ponies, mules and donkeys with \$491,000 in sales.
- 49 farms sold \$269,000 of food directly to consumers. This is a 1-farm increase, and a 56.4% increase in direct sales from 2007 sales of \$172,000.
- Direct sales were 1.1% of farm product sales, greater than the national average of 0.3%.

Leavenworth County KS highlights (Census of Agriculture, 2012):

- 1,133 farms, 6% less than in 2007.
- Leavenworth County has 184,471 acres of land in farms.
- Farmers sold \$36.4 million of products in 2012.
- \$25.2 million (69.2%) of these sales were crops.
- \$11.2 million (30.7%) of these sales were livestock.
- The most prevalent farm size is 50 to 179 acres, with 434 farms (38.3%) in this category.
- The next most prevalent is 10 to 49 acres, with 415 (36.6%) farms.
- 24 farms (2.1%) are 1,000 acres or more.
- 465 farms (41%) are less than 50 acres.
- 729 farms (64.3%) sold less than \$10,000 in farm products.
- 67 farms (5.9%) sold more than \$100,000 in farm products.
- The County ranks 8th of 73 counties in the state in sale of vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes with \$542,000 in sales
- The county ranks 5th of 72 counties in the state in sales of nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod with \$4.2 million in sales
- The County ranks 9th of 103 counties in the state for inventory of laying hens with 3,299.
- The county ranks 2nd of 43 counties in the state for inventory of roosters, *but inventory figures were suppressed by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality.*
- 99 farms sold \$314,000 of food directly to consumers. This is a 17-farm increase, and a 97% increase in direct sales from 2007 sales of \$159,000.
- Direct sales were 0.89% of farm product sales, which is greater than the national average of 0.3%.

Clay County MO highlights (Census of Agriculture, 2012):

- 578 farms, 23% less than in 2007.
- Clay County has 110,650 acres of land in farms.
- Farmers sold \$50.3 million of products in 2012.
- \$19.4 million (38.6%) of these sales were crops.
- \$30.9 million (61.4%) of these sales were livestock.
- The most prevalent farm size is 10 to 49 acres, with 254 farms (43.9%) in this category.
- The next most prevalent is 50 to 179 acres, with 167 (28.9%) farms.
- 22 farms (3.8%) are 1,000 acres or more.

- 449 farms (77.7%) are less than 50 acres.
- 347 farms (60%) sold less than \$10,000 in farm products.
- 68 farms (11.7%) sold more than \$100,000 in farm products.
- Clay County ranks 10th in 109 counties in the state for sales of vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes with \$643,000 in sales.
- The county ranks 7th in 114 in the state for the sale of other animals and other animal products with \$208,000 in sales.
- 34 farms sold \$206,000 of food directly to consumers. This is a 17-farm decrease, and a 17% increase in direct sales from 2007 sales of \$175,000.
- Direct sales were 0.4% of farm product sales, slightly greater than the national average of 0.3%.

Jackson County MO highlights (Census of Agriculture, 2012):

- 701 farms, 16% less than in 2007.
- Jackson County has 110,891 acres of land in farms.
- Farmers sold \$32.5 million of products in 2012.
- \$25.4 million (78.1%) of these sales were crops.
- \$7.1 million (21.8%) of these sales were livestock.
- The most prevalent farm size is 10 to 49 acres, with 335 farms (47.8%) in this category.
- The next most prevalent is 50 to 179 acres, with 180 (25.7%) farms.
- 27 farms (3.8%) are 1,000 acres or more.
- 401 farms (57.2%) are less than 50 acres.
- 455 farms (64.9%) sold less than \$10,000 in farm products.
- 62 farms (8.8%) sold more than \$100,000 in farm products.
- Jackson County ranks 9th in 109 counties in the state for sales in nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod \$2 million in sales
- The county ranks 10th in 114 counties in the state in sales of horses, ponies, donkeys, and mules with \$483,000 in sales
- 59 farms sold \$173,000 of food directly to consumers. This is a 4-farm increase, and a 12% decrease in direct sales from 2007 sales of \$107,000.
- Direct sales were 0.5% of farm product sales, slightly greater than the national average of 0.3%.

Platte County MO highlights (Census of Agriculture, 2012):

- 599 farms, 17% less than in 2007.
- Platte County has 152,942 acres of land in farms.
- Farmers sold \$44.8 million of products in 2012.
- \$37.5 million (83.7%) of these sales were crops.
- \$7.3 (16.3%) of these sales were livestock.
- The most prevalent farm size is 50 to 179 acres, with 259 farms (43.2%) in this category.
- The next most prevalent is 10 to 49 acres, with 181 (30.2%) farms.

- 33 farms (5.5%) are 1,000 acres or more.
- 198 farms (33%) are less than 50 acres.
- 348 farms (58.1%) sold less than \$10,000 in farm products.
- 72 farms (12%) sold more than \$100,000 in farm products.
- Platte County ranks 1st of 12 counties in the state in sales of tobacco with \$778,000 in sales
- 35 farms sold \$190,000 of food directly to consumers. This is a 7-farm decrease, and a 18% decrease in direct sales from 2007 sales of \$232,000.
- Direct sales were 0.4% of farm product sales, slightly greater than the national average of 0.3%.

Appendix P: Economic and Other Impacts of Urban Agriculture

The economic impact of urban agriculture is something that must be built over time — it cannot be harvested immediately. This is because the prevailing food infrastructure does not support urban farming, so supportive networks, including inputs, marketing channels, distribution mechanisms, and knowledge, must be built from scratch. Most successful farms also create new business models, blending for-profit and nonprofit activity, and building consumer loyalty to sustain themselves.

One 3-acre urban farm in Philadelphia sells more than \$1 million of products per year, hiring 18 staff as of 2012. The farm largely earns its income through product sales (Golden, 2013). It was founded in 1997 as a hydroponic lettuce farm with a substantial human and financial investment by Tom Sereduk and Mary Seton Corboy, who drew upon a favorable land lease from the city government, and who won a federal grant to cover early operational costs. While the farm supports more than 650 CSA shares (DiGiacaomo, 2017), much of the produce sold from the inner-city farm is raised on farms in rural Pennsylvania and New Jersey, with the urban farm acting as an aggregator. Most of their sales are nursery products sold to their urban neighbors for landscaping. The farm also benefits from easy access to a core of nearby restaurants (Corboy, 2009).

In recent years, the farm expanded to a second site in West Philadelphia, where it can grow in larger quantities. Both farms play a strong role in neighborhood revitalization, by training local youth, providing jobs and a gathering point, and by raising property values. While the founders could obtain a 99-year lease on the land for one dollar in 1997 from a city desperate for improvement, homes in the neighborhood now sell for \$500,000 and more (DiGiacaomo, 2017).

Other urban farms have sold as much as \$100,000 an acre of produce raised on their farms. One four-acre farm near Athens, Georgia—founded by a wealthy couple were in a position to hire others to manage the operation— provided a livelihood for four full-time staff as of 2009. Former farm manger Celia Barss said that the main challenge was not to grow that much food, it was rather to market it effectively (Barss, 2008).

The Massachusetts Avenue Project (MAP) farm, a three-quarters acre farm in Buffalo, New York had an operating budget of \$320,000 in 2009. At the time the farm hired five full-time employees and engaged several key volunteers. Most of their programmatic revenue came from training youth how to garden (Golden, 2013).

One review of 78 published sources documenting the impacts of urban agriculture found that dramatic economic benefits were difficult to document. “Overall, social impacts were the most frequently documented, with health impacts second. Economic impacts were the most difficult to find, and often used modeled projections rather than primary data” (Golden, 2013).

The authors identified the following beneficial impacts from urban agriculture:

Social Impacts

- Creating Safe Places/ Reducing Blight
- Access to Land
- Community Development/Building Social Capital
- Education and Youth Development Opportunities
- Cross-Generational and Cultural Integration

Health Impacts

- Food Access and Security
- Increased Fruit and Vegetable Consumption
- Food and Health Literacy
- General Well-Being (Mental Health and Physical Activity)

Economic Impacts

- Job Creation, Training, and Business Incubation
- Market Expansion for Farmers
- Economic Savings on Food
- Savings for Municipal Agencies
- Increased Home Values

One study the authors referenced documented that neighborhood residents saved over \$915,000 by growing food on one community garden site (Golden, 2013).

Golden further found that city governments have saved land by fostering urban agriculture. She cited an advocacy group in San Francisco which found that “community management of vacant lots, transformed into urban agriculture sites, saved the Department of Public Works an estimated \$4,100 a year per site by preventing vandalism, dumping, and labor-intensive upkeep.”

They also found that property values increased near community gardens. “Tax revenues from these property increases were estimated at half a million dollars per garden over twenty years, making initial investments from government agencies for community garden and farm projects cost productive.” Yet the authors also cautioned that this can be a mixed benefit. One study they cited “notes that these gardens and farms can attract younger, more affluent populations which can often lead to gentrification, culturally changing neighborhoods and alienating long-time residents” (Golden, 2013).

One area in which Kansas City, Kansas may excel is that, with plenty of land available, it may be possible to offer land access at very favorable rates. Golden found that “Accessing land was commonly cited as a major barrier for urban agriculture projects,” while a business plan for a half-acre urban farm in San Francisco found that “At \$0.30 cents/square foot/month, rent makes up 86% of annual expenses” (Ganguly, *et al.*, 2010).

Overall, Golden found that collaboration and commitment to a long-term vision were key.

“The most successful UA (urban agriculture) projects described in the literature were products of fruitful partnerships.”

This was echoed by a University of Missouri study that recommended that “City councils should adopt a “how to” approach to urban agriculture rather than a “yes” or “no,” as a growing list of cities promoting urban agriculture across the nation shows that it can be done successfully” (Hendrickson, 2012).

Hendrickson focused on the central role that cities could play by taking initiative. “Local food system development relies on creating, strengthening and enhancing right-sized food infrastructure. Currently, transportation and distribution systems are oriented to larger, higher volume product flows, which inadvertently shut out many small growers (especially urban farmers) and smaller retailers.

“To ameliorate food access problems, cities may need to help re-create critical infrastructure that can help food systems function efficiently. Infrastructure can mean a variety of things, from accessible storage and warehousing for distribution of locally or regionally produced food products, to processing facilities where crop harvests can be turned into value-added food products like jam, milled grain or frozen vegetables” (Hendrickson, 2012).

Hendrickson concluded that this required a flexible approach. “Communication is the key to having a good urban agriculture strategy.”

Appendix Q: Methodology and Authors

Methodology: Research for this report included quantitative analysis of public data sets, review of scholarly and community journals, and study of books relevant to area agriculture, culture, and history. Semi-structured Interviews were held the 56 stakeholders listed above. For the most part, interviewees were selected by the steering committee, who also made contact with each source to schedule meetings during two different trips in 2017. Primarily these were carried out in person, in group or one on one settings. A few select interviews were performed by phone. In person interviews were held in Kansas City metro region. Telephone interviews from our home offices in Minnesota and Michigan were performed in 2017. We are deeply indebted to all of those who offered such deep insights to our work.

Kenneth A. Meter, MPA is one of the most experienced food system analysts in the U.S., integrating market analysis, business development, systems thinking, and social concerns. Meter holds 45 years of experience in inner-city and rural community capacity building. His local economic analyses have promoted local food networks in 125 regions in 39 states and Manitoba. He developed a \$9.85-million plan for local food investment for the state of South Carolina, and has completed similar studies for Alaska, Mississippi, Indiana, Ohio, and Minnesota. Currently he is writing a statewide food plan for Hawaii focused on low-income access. He has developed strategic regional food plans for regions near Shreveport, Lafayette, Monroe, Fort Wayne, Denver, and rural North Dakota, Virginia, Maine, and Washington State. Meter consulted with the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service and Colorado State University to help write a 2016 Toolkit for measuring economic impacts of local food development.

Meter has been invited to give more than 500 presentations across the U.S. since 2001. Typically, these appearances have unveiled new economic findings he uncovered while researching the local farm and food economy in each locale. In 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016, Meter served as a keynote speaker at the Nashville Food Summit, for which he compiled economic data covering the Nashville region's farm and food economy. These appearances have also built exceptional trust among local farmers and local foods leaders. For a complete list of Meter's presentations, see <http://www.crcworks.org/presentations.pdf>

Meter holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the Harvard Kennedy School, a Master of Arts in History from Boston University, and a BA in Chemistry from Swarthmore College. He has taught microeconomics at the Harvard Kennedy School, the Economic History of U.S. Agriculture at the University of Minnesota, and Food, Land and Economic Justice at Metropolitan State University. He completed a summer course in cooperative economic development at the University of Bologna (Italy). Meter was one of the first to recognize, in 1974, the economic importance of local food systems.

Meter serves as president of **Crossroads Resource Center**, a nonprofit research and consulting group in Minneapolis, which he joined in 1973. In this capacity, he led 85 residents of the city of Minneapolis in a public process to develop a 50-year vision for a sustainable city, including 30 measures of success. These measures were incorporated into the city budget process, winning national recognition for the city. Meter has also consulted with USDA, EPA, several state governments, and Stanford University.

Associate: Megan Phillips Goldenberg, MS, principal at **New Growth Associates (a woman-owned small firm)**, brings seasoned experience producing feasibility studies, economic analysis, and policy recommendations in Colorado, South Carolina, Alaska, Mississippi, Maine, Hawaii, and Michigan, with extensive background in project management, survey development, economic impact analysis, academic research, quantitative methods, interviews, and food-based business and organization consulting. Megan is most interested in the intersections of public policy, food systems, and community development. She endeavors to work in a community building capacity in order to create and maintain a sense of place through better science and informed decision-making.

Goldenberg holds a Master's degree in Agricultural and Natural Resource Economics from Colorado State University. Her coursework emphasized Public Policy and Community Economic Development. Through her graduate research, Goldenberg worked with Be Local Northern Colorado, the Northern Colorado Regional Food System Assessment, Boulder County's Building Farmers Market Track program, and the Building Farmers in the West Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program.

Goldenberg then worked for WPM Consulting in Boulder, Colorado as a Food Systems and Policy Associate. With WPM Consulting, she assisted with the development and initial execution of the Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council (with networking support for local food coalitions, state-wide) and provided research support for three county and three regional food system assessments (including metro Denver and rural Colorado) while facilitating community projects focused on increasing healthy eating and active living through sound policy and planning. In her spare time, Goldenberg co-founded and co-directed The Growing Project, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that promotes the value of a strong, diverse, and just local food system to all residents of Northern Colorado through direct agricultural experiences, education, and advocacy.

Her firm, **New Growth Associates**, was founded in 2010. New Growth Associates is a woman-owned company that brings together a small group of professionals in order to support evidence-based decision making for community and economic development projects, as well as to provide professional project management expertise and business consulting services. With particular interests in creating and supporting economic development opportunities for family farmers and increasing equitable healthy food access across communities, New Growth Associates is dedicated to providing sound analysis and professional project management to support informed decision making at all tiers of the food system in order to ensure long-term success. From enterprise analysis at the farm level to strategic policy planning and investment development at the state level, New Growth Associates leverages the expertise needed to grow your initiatives. New Growth Associates collaborates frequently with Crossroads Resource Center.