

Appendix IV: A List and Literary Review of Kansas Food System Reports

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INTRODUCTION – HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Food production through agriculture has long been a source of struggle, prosperity, and overwhelming pride in Kansas. Early, nineteenth century explorers like DeSoto, John Smith, and Jacques Cartier described the cultivation of “good and large fields of corn” by Native Americans in the region (Bureau of American Ethnology, 1907; White, J., 1913). Maize, or Indian corn, was a staple in the diets of Native Americans throughout the continent. Archeological evidence dating back to the 1600s suggests that some native communities relied on agriculture to settle and remain in Kansas (Banyasiz, M., 2013). By cultivating the land, Native Americans in Kansas were able to sustain themselves in times of need and enjoy a rich and diverse diet in times of plenty. However, growing crops never fully replaced the indigenous tradition of hunting and gathering food.

The fertility of these Midwestern lands played a major role in shaping the image and the spirit of the settlers who called Kansas home. Once the state lines were drawn, in the 1850s, delegates and prospectors who had interest in attracting inhabitants began marketing Kansas as a garden utopia throughout the nation. Feeling threatened by the loss of work force, the East Coast retaliated by publishing writings depicting Kansas as a desert wasteland. In a sense, they were both telling simple truths, and the people who could attest to that were Kansans. The shifts between feast and famine caused many to leave the state, but those that stayed earned reputations as, “an especially hardy breed of yeoman farmers. ...Those who stayed would be chastened and gain a clear-eyed, pragmatic approach to life” (Shortridge, J.R., 2005).

Below we offer a list of over 30 years of reports related to Kansas food systems, and cite key findings and recommendations from select reports to highlight thematic messages along that timeline.

Taken as a whole, the farm- and food-related studies and reports listed below demonstrate how Kansans have become increasingly disconnected from the food their state produces. They reveal how Kansas agriculture now produces fewer food types, on larger farms and with fewer farmers than in years past. At the same time, residents of the state invest less in Kansas-produced food and rely more on imported food than ever before.

LIST AND LITERARY REVIEW

KANSAS FOOD PRODUCTION & FOOD SYSTEM REPORTS

Kindscher, K. (1982). *The Kansas Food System: Analysis and Action Toward Sustainability*. The Kansas Rural Center and Rodale Press.

The Kansas Rural (KRC) Center published its first report about food production in the state and its effects on the overall food system in 1982. Written by Kelly Kindscher of KRC, in collaboration with the Cornucopia Project of Rodale Press, *The Kansas Food System: Analysis and Action Toward Sustainability* study provides an in-depth analysis of the system of food production and consumption trends in the state of Kansas at that time. In the study, Kindscher discusses the impact of agriculture on the environment and natural resources, and offers suggestions for the creation of a more sustainable food system; a food system that is, “culturally, environmentally, and technologically sustainable in respect to production and all other aspects of the Kansas food system – including resource inputs, cultivation techniques, processing, and distributing.” By taking into consideration the physical geography of the state, the increased industrialization of food production since World War II, and the decrease in product diversity, the study

determined that, “production of crops as currently practiced in Kansas is not sustainable into the future.”

The report states that change will occur when, “vocal, intelligent, and concerned people take action to change current structures, systems and practices.” It provides a list of actions that enable consumers, industry, and government to do just that.

The report suggests that the first step towards achieving a sustainable food system is for Kansas consumers to purchase food grown in Kansas. Producers were encouraged to label their products with the registered trademark, “From the Land of Kansas,” a brand that was recently resurrected through the Kansas Department of Agriculture’s statute-required Trademark Program. Kindscher does not deny that purchasing and eating foods produced by Kansas farmers requires a change in diet; eating seasonally and putting effort toward ensuring wheat and dairy products are produced in Kansas. Consumers are recommended to keep their dollars circulating locally by shopping at local or regionally owned grocery stores. Citizens are advised to make an effort to understand the challenges that local farmers face, to get involved with what their children eat at school, and to have discussions with community members about food and hunger both locally and abroad.

Kindscher further suggests that farmers consider alternative agricultural practices and energy sources for production that would mitigate soil erosion and the need for chemical fertilizers. Growers are advised to get to know consumers and take charge of marketing their products directly to them. This would allow consumers who want to support local foods the ease of finding those goods.

Finally, **Kindscher advised producers to join farm organizations, to become “an organized force when seeking legislation, to create marketing channels and to share and exchange information and skills.”**

Business and government certainly play a role in whether the suggestions above are easily achieved. Kindscher states: **“The State Government of Kansas and the Extension Service at Kansas State University can take a much more active role in promoting food self-reliance, a more regional food supply, and in developing a sustainable food system for Kansas.”** One of the primary ways they can do this is by working with agri-business to provide “information and guidance through specific research and legislation.” Examples of legislation that would strengthen the state’s food system include requiring state institutions to purchase local foods when they are available at the same level and quality as imported foods. Kindscher also suggests that the state government should make greater strides to provide guidance to the state land grant college to move toward a decentralized and diversified agricultural system. The report points out that state governments have an opportunity to establish progressive policies that will shape the type of food system a state has.

Kindscher’s report concludes that following the outlined recommendations would bring Kansas closer to achieving goals for its food system that include: abundance, dependability, sustainability, safety, efficiency, appropriateness, equitability, wealth, flexibility, and openness.

Fund, M. (February 1999). Kansas Food System: Local Production of Fruits and Vegetables Offers Opportunities for Farmers and Consumers. *Rural Papers*, 7-11.

Mary Fund of the Kansas Rural Center wrote an article for the *Rural Papers* publication providing a summary of a 1998 update to Kindscher’s *The Kansas Food System* analysis. The new study was conducted by Kindscher and the Kansas Biological Survey. Fund reports that sixteen years after the original analysis, production trends changed little in the state. The number of farmers decreased, while the scale of individual farming operations increased. This study used 1996 consumption statistics to identify gaps in production and consumption for specific food products. According to the updated report, “Kansas

produces much more than it consumes in meats and grains, commodities which play an important role in [Kansas's] export economy...the state increasingly relies on imported foods as our source of fruits, vegetables, and other specialty crops.”

The report goes on to illustrate the potential for family farmers to fill in those gaps by allocating resources toward production of fruits, vegetables, and other specialty crops.

Creating this type of regional economy would allow farmers to eliminate certain profit takers by connecting directly with the consumer, while boosting the state's economy. The farmer wanting to pull out of the global commodity price market, however, would need help in the form of niche marketing and credit programs for small/beginning operations that specialize in local food production.

Pothukuchi, K. (2004). Community Food Assessment: A First Step in Planning for Community Food Security. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 23: 356. Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/healthtopics/healthyfood/community_assessment.htm. doi: 10.1177/0739456X04264908

Kami Pothukuchi is a professor at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, whose research interests include community food systems and community participation in planning. Pothukuchi's article reports on nine community food assessments (CFAs) around the United States to identify common traits that planners can incorporate into their practices. All of the CFAs analyzed had a common concern for establishing a sustainable food system.

Sustainability in a food system, the assessment concludes, is achieved by, **“creating spatially closer links between two or more food system activities; making specific food system activities more environmentally sensitive; including previously excluded players such as small farmers and low-income consumers; and educating community residents about their participation in food systems.”**

This research aims to illustrate the integral role CFAs play in planning a community and the potential for community planners to lead CFAs.

Champion, B. (2007). The Political Economy of “Local Foods” in Eastern Kansas. DPhil. *University of Oxford*. Retrieved from <http://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:6f0586d3-7302-4650-9fe7-8254b1e7e1f0>

This dissertation, conducted by a native Kansan studying at University of Oxford in England, assesses the political economy of local food relations occurring in Eastern Kansas as a result of the convergence of alternative agriculture and counter-cuisine movements. Findings from the study reveal how, at the time, local food generally represented a marketing niche in urban consumerism served primarily by regional rural producers.

Champion's dissertation provides insight into the range of different value systems employed by diverse players engaged in Eastern Kansas's local food system. Among 357 Eastern Kansas local food system individuals and organizations interviewed through the study, there were large variations in marketing methods and distances related to scales of production and distribution. In addition, the value systems and types of relationships engaged through these marketing methods were similarly variable.

The report concludes that, while participants in local foods are almost universally doing so for good reasons, if they want to participate consciously in ways that challenge facets of the dominant food system then they must validate their values as they deepen those local relationships. The study reveals that “local” can mean very different things to different people and in different contexts.

Meter, K. (2008). Eastern Kaw River Region (Kansas) Local Farm & Food Economy: Highlights of a Data Compilation. Crossroads Resource Center. Retrieved from <http://www.crcworks.org/?submit=fffc>

Crossroads Resource Center partnered with the Kansas Rural Center and Kansas State University to gather data on the food and farm economy in the eastern Kaw River Region, in Northeast Kansas.

Peterson, H., Selfa, T., and Janke, R. (2010). Barriers and Opportunities for Sustainable Food Systems in Northeastern Kansas. Sustainability 2010, 2, 232-251. Retrieved from <http://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/2/1/232>. doi:10.3390/su2010232

This cross-discipline analysis was conducted by Kansas State University professors specializing in agricultural economics, horticulture, and sociology. It seeks to understand barriers and opportunities for a more sustainable food system in Northeastern Kansas. Through the study, producers and buyers both identified barriers regarding mismatches of available quantities and prices. At the time, producers' enthusiasm to supply locally exceeded buyers' interest to source locally. Transportation was identified as one of the major concerns by producers.

DCFPC. (2011). Building a Deep-Rooted Local Food System: A Food System Analysis for Douglas County, Jefferson County & Leavenworth County in Kansas. Produced for the Douglas County Food Policy Council. Retrieved from http://www.douglas-county.com/depts/ad/su/su_fpc.aspx

The goal of this report is “to identify the challenges and opportunities for a successful and sustainable local food system” in the tri-county area that includes Douglas, Jefferson, and Leavenworth counties. The report highlights key findings from an assessment of both newfound data and data cited in the two sources listed above (Meter, 2008; Peterson, et. al., 2010).

Key findings of the report include: a 54 percent overweight and obesity rate, more than 10,000 residents struggling with food access issues, \$392 million spent on food annually, and less than 0.1 percent of land devoted to vegetable production in the tri-county region.

The report outlines a plan for addressing those key issues by: **preserving prime agricultural land for farming; increasing and incentivizing local production and consumption of fruits, vegetables, poultry, and dairy; attracting food processing businesses to the region; offering incentives for new and existing food retailers to better serve low-access neighborhoods; and supporting the expansion of farmers markets, community gardens, and mobile food carts/trucks that sell fruits and vegetables to help provide greater access to healthful food.**

Anegon, Angela. (2014). Evaluating the Local Food System of Manhattan, Kansas: Producer and Institution Perspectives. Masters of Science Thesis. Kansas State University. Available upon request.

Angela Anegon's Master's thesis, submitted to the Department of Agriculture at Kansas State University, evaluates the “characteristics of a local food system within the fabric of an agriculturally rich state.”

Through her research, Anegon sought to understand the barriers that kept producers surrounding Manhattan, Kansas, from expanding into institutional markets like school and hospital dining services and grocery stores. Anegon surveyed 162 producers within a 150 mile radius of Manhattan, Kansas, and interviewed 11 local institutions. Counties within the Kansas City Metropolitan area were purposefully excluded from this study

because similar research was taking place in those areas at the same time. This compilation of qualitative data revealed the common themes addressed in the following paragraphs.

In general, the producers surveyed were small-scale, diverse producers who relied mostly on direct sales to consumers. These direct-to-consumer markets include farmers markets and community supported agriculture (CSA) arrangements (see Glossary). Anegon notes that one of the disadvantages of this type of marketing is the small scale, which leads to limited economic stability for these producers.

Many producers want to stabilize their income by scaling up their production to meet not only the demands of their consumers, but also break into the direct-to-institution market. This is an emerging concept in which local producers market their products directly to public and private institutions like schools, universities, hospitals, prisons and other retail locations. In theory, this type of marketing should mimic the positive aspects of direct-to-consumer marketing (social, economic and environmental benefits) while allowing producers to scale up production and contribute to a larger regional food system.

The data collected from the producer surveys and the interviews with institutions revealed challenges that keep producers from accessing the direct-to-institution markets. Producers expressed concerns that included low prices, small production quantities, and delivery costs. Institution concerns also included production quantities, seasonality, quality of communication, and food safety. The report states that improving communication between producers and institutions, and allowing producers greater access to resources to increase seasonal production, can help lead to successful direct-to-institution marketing, to further develop the local food system in Manhattan.

Anegon concludes that in Manhattan, **local food system development hinges upon allowing producers access to the resources they need to increase production and break into direct-to-institution markets.**

KANSAS HEALTHFUL FOOD ACCESS & CONSUMPTION REPORTS

Adrian, M. (1997). Kansas and Nutrition. *Kansas Health*, 1:6.

Arya, R., Zhang, Y., Wilkinson, A., and Adrian, M. (1997). The Rise of the Salad Bar: Nutrition in Kansas. *Kansas Health*, 1: 6.

In 1997, the Kansas Health Institute (KHI) published a series of articles in its bimonthly publication, *Kansas Health*, that put a spotlight on consumption trends in the state, and the effects those trends were having on public health. At that time, it was “estimated that more than one in three Kansans [would] die of coronary heart disease alone, and that one in five [would] develop symptoms of the disease before the age of 60” (Adrian, 1997).

KHI’s research showed that a number of factors influenced food choices: age, gender, marital status, education, employment, and income. Both articles made the point that food choices influence the health of the individual along with the health of the overall population. Arya’s article (Arya, R., et. al., 1997) took the research a step further and tried to understand the relationship between nutrition and health in the state. Using data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), KHI determined that “only 31.8 percent of Kansans consumed five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day as recommended” (Arya, R., et. al., 1997), and that age and level of education received were the variables of greatest influence when it came to people’s dietary choices.

Eberhart-Phillips, J., Walsh, E., & Bhakta, N. (2010). Health Risk Behaviors of Kansans: 2009 Kansas Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. Kansas Department of Health and Environment Bureau of Health Promotion.

LaClair, B. J., (2010). Kansans Not Following Nutrition Guidelines: Findings from the Kansas Health and Nutrition Survey. Kansas Health Institute, Issue Brief. Retrieved from <http://www.khi.org>.

Knowing that dietary choices directly impact health and wellness, the Kansas Health Institute (KHI) conducted a study to assess the overall dietary quality of persons in the state of Kansas. In 1995, the USDA's Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion developed the Healthy Eating Index (HEI), a tool that allows researchers to assign a score to individuals' diets based on survey results. KHI made this tool specific to factors that influence Kansans' diet and physical activity behaviors, resulting in the Kansas Health and Nutrition Survey (KHANS).

The data collected from this survey revealed that "a majority of Kansans were unaware of the USDA's recommended dietary guidelines and an even greater number failed to consume a healthy diet" (LaClair, 2010). In fact, only 8 percent of the surveyed individuals achieved a "good" score on the HEI. Understanding the factors that influence Kansans' dietary decisions, the report explains, provides an opportunity for policymakers to take action by improving access to and affordability of fresh fruits and vegetables, and for consumers to make more informed choices.

LaClair states that the greatest impact policymakers can have on the dietary habits of Kansans is to implement public policies that "foster a supportive eating environment and encourage healthy dietary habits," along with policies that encourage children and adults to incorporate more servings of fruits and vegetable into their daily diets.

Pratik, Pandya. (2011). Health Risk Behaviors of Kansans: 2011 Kansas Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. Kansas Department of Health and Environment Bureau of Health Promotion. Retrieved from http://www.kdheks.gov/brfss/PDF/2011_Kansas_BRFSS_Report.pdf

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013). State Indicator Report on Fruits and Vegetables, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from <http://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/21642>

This Center for Disease Control (CDC) report gives a national perspective on fruit and vegetable consumption by assessing fruit and vegetable consumption in each state, while discussing behavioral, policy and environmental indicators that influence consumption. The authors touch on topics like school lunches and limitations of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), providing a comprehensive overview that explains why Americans do or do not consume enough fruits and vegetables on a daily basis. The purpose of the report is three fold: to illustrate how states can support greater consumption of fruits and vegetables; to monitor progress and celebrate state success; and to identify opportunities for improvement in fruit and vegetable access.

According to the data collected by the CDC, Kansas falls below the national average in the following areas:

- The percentage of farmers markets that accept Food Assistance (SNAP) benefits;
- The percentage of cropland acreage harvested for fruits and vegetables (Kansas average is 0.1 percent while the national average is 2.5 percent);
- The percentage of census tracts with at least one healthy food retailer within half a mile of the census tract boundary.

Health & Wellness Coalition of Wichita. (2013). Wichita Food Deserts: Why We Should Care. Retrieved from <http://findyourfitwichita.com/food-study.pdf>

The intention of this report is to build awareness and understanding of current accessibility to healthful foods in the Wichita community. With this understanding, the Health & Wellness Coalition of Wichita hopes to bridge the gaps identified in the report to aid in development of a healthier community.

Healthy Kids Challenge. (2014). Nutrition Standards for Kansas Communities. Retrieved from <http://www.healthykidschallenge.com>.

This brief report outlines standards for healthy snacking. It is intended as a guide for other organizations to reform their food practices so that, in time, the snacks and meals they provide will meet these standards.

Kansas Health Foundation Fellows VII. (2013). The Challenge of Increasing Access to and Consumption of Healthy Foods in Kansas: How Might More Stakeholders Work Together More Often in Pursuit of the Common Good? A Discussion Brief. Kansas Leadership Center. Retrieved from http://issuu.com/kansasleadershipcenter/docs/discussion_brief

This report, prepared by the Kansas Leadership Center with guidance and input from the 2012-2013 Kansas Health Foundation Fellows, identifies key issues related to civic leadership in efforts to improve access to and consumption of healthful foods in Kansas. The Fellows were part of a year-long leadership development program offered annually through the Kansas Health Foundation. The 22 participants pooled their experience and knowledge to develop this resource to help Kansans better understand the civic challenges associated with providing access to and consumption of healthful foods. This report focuses on subjective information and aims to capture different interpretations and opinions that exist surrounding the issue. All of the information in this report reflects the questions, ideas, and solutions considered by the participants during the fellowship experience.

This discussion begins by identifying trends related to healthful food access and consumption in the state. Those trends include: growing and more productive farm operations; significant amounts of food waste; increased consumption of processed foods; decreased consumption of fruits and vegetables; increased rates of obesity; increased circumstances of food insecurity; formation of food deserts; lack of knowledge surrounding diets.

Statewide trends mirror those around the nation, and this discussion brief highlights some of the contradictions associated with food production and consumption trends. As American farms are growing larger and more productive, Americans are spending less of their total income on food, and the food that is purchased has less nutritional value. Despite more food production in the nation, there are populations of Americans, and Kansans, that remain food insecure. Factors like rising grain and fuel costs threaten to raise food prices, which would further limit access to healthful food. This report cites research by the Kansas Health Institute that shows how these trends impact how Kansans eat, the perception Kansans have of their diets, and public health overall.

To continue the discussion, the fellows had to work towards a definition of “healthy foods”. Through their discourse they determined that healthy foods are “the basis of a diet that is low in fat, added sugar and sodium, helps fight chronic disease, allows for the maintenance of healthier weights, and is balanced based on expert recommendations,” and is safe for the individual to consume. This definition is based on the insights of the Fellows VII participants, and the report acknowledges this may not fulfill everyone’s definition of healthful food. For example, this definition does not consider whether the food item was

processed, grown with pesticides or from GMO seed, or transported across the nation; all factors that can influence one's perception of whether a food item is or is not beneficial to health.

The fellows provide seven broad categories of conditions that stand in the way of Kansans accessing healthier foods:

1. Affordability,
2. Proximity/transportation,
3. Availability,
4. Sustainability/profitability,
5. Consumer awareness/demand for healthful foods,
6. Consumer capacity to utilize healthful foods, and
7. Cultural norm or expectation.

The fellows conclude that resolving these conditions requires strategies for bringing together diverse stakeholders. Drawing from the experience and knowledge of the fellows, **they determined that accessibility cannot improve until the poverty and income issues that affect Kansans are addressed.** They pointed to the opportunity to incentivize healthful food production by subsidizing fruits and vegetables, forming food hubs, and educating producers on food related business. The fellows suggest that regulations be considered to reduce food waste and to continue using research and technology to increase production. They concluded that consumers must be educated about their diets, and that cultural norms need to change in Kansas. Family meal times and healthy lifestyles, they said, should be encouraged, and education and media campaigns targeting young children are one way to help teach youth about health, nutrition, and consumption.

The report emphasizes the need for food systems to be a consideration of all government planning efforts. It explains that, ideally, civic conversation will continue to shed light on different vantage points and political persuasion, and **coordination across sectors will facilitate the goal of making healthful food more accessible and desirable to the people of Kansas.**

SCALE, Inc. (June 2014). Food Hub Feasibility Study: Northeast Kansas. Douglas County Food Policy Council. Retrieved from http://www.douglas-county.com/depts/ad/su/su_fpc.aspx

This food hub feasibility study, conducted by SCALE, Inc. on behalf of the Douglas County Food Policy Council, offers a current look at the challenges faced by Northeast Kansas producers and consumers when it comes to selling and purchasing locally produced foods. With funding from USDA Rural Development and the Kansas Health Foundation, this report provides an analysis of the food system in Northeast Kansas.

According to the study, there are trials on both sides: "farmers struggle to find sizable, secure, well-paying markets, and the vast majority of consumers do not participate in local food transactions, whether because of awareness, cost, or accessibility." Part of SCALE's investigation involved gathering qualitative data from consumers and food markets (grocers and restaurants) to gauge what buyers perceive to be their greatest challenges in sourcing local food. Producers were questioned similarly, but from the perspective of marketing their goods.

With the local-level information, the researchers took a look at kitchen incubator and food hub models from around the country to see if establishing a food hub in the northeast region of Kansas would provide solutions to the challenges on both sides of the spectrum. The USDA defines a food hub as infrastructure that supports a stronger regional food system by offering a combination of production, aggregation, distribution, and marketing services for small- and mid-scale producers surrounding the hub.

The study found that “Lawrence and Kansas City have developed a relatively mature local food system in terms of both the farmers producing food and individual consumers buying from them.” At this time, consumer desire for locally sourced food does exceed supply and establishing a food hub in the region could be a solution to some, if not all, of the challenges and concerns that were expressed.

Despite the risks associated with subsidizing a food hub in its initial phases, the consultants at SCALE, Inc., believe the time is right for this type of project in Northeast Kansas. The study is frank about the fact that establishing a food hub is no easy task. Like all business models, it requires investment and is not likely to be profitable in the first years. However, there is the possibility that once infrastructure and trust is established, a food hub could work in this region. At the very least, SCALE asserts it is something that warrants further investigation.

Though Lawrence and Kansas City communities have made great strides towards developing a local food system, SCALE suggests there is a chance those strides will stall if the community is not energized. The report provides short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations for getting started. In the short-term, the consultants recommend designating a lead organization to form a planning and implementation team that will develop a Draft Action Plan by the end of 2014.

Launching a pilot food hub is listed as a medium-term recommendation that would happen in 2016. From that point, organizers would start incorporating more products and seek partnerships with the Kansas Department of Agriculture and regional farmers market leaders. There would be an effort to reach beyond the current local food consumer base.

The Douglas County Food Policy Council is using this research to consider the role that a food hub can play in addressing certain priorities for the Northeast Kansas regional food system. Those “Core Functions” aim to help expand opportunities for established producers, help new producers succeed, improve reliability and access, and accessing a new consumer base.

Based on quantitative and qualitative information gathered by the consultants at SCALE, along with case studies of successful food hub in other parts of the nation, the consultants determined that a producer-driven food hub stands the best chance at facilitating those “Core Functions.”

Public Health Law Center, William Mitchell College of Law. (2014). State Laws Impacting Farmers’ Markets in Kansas. Produced for the Kansas Health Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/resources/state-laws-impacting-farmers%E2%80%99-markets-kansas>

Public Health Law Center, William Mitchell College of Law. (2014). Local Government Regulations of Farmer’s Markets in Kansas. Produced for the Kansas Health Foundation. Retrieved from <http://publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/08.18.14.Local%20Government%20Regulation%20of%20Farmers%20Markets%20in%20Kansas.pdf>

Healthy Kansas 2020 Steering Committee. (2014). Kansas Health Assessment and Improvement Plan. Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Retrieved from <http://www.healthykansans2020.org/KHAIP.shtml>

In 2014, the Healthy Kansas 2020 steering committee, chaired by Dr. Robert Moser, the State Health Officer and Secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), joined state and local stakeholders to complete a nearly three-year process of conducting a state health assessment and developing a state health improvement plan. This plan is the result of meetings with hundreds of

participants from across Kansas who helped sort and analyze data, researched best practices and evidence-based strategies, and reviewed current assets and strengths in addressing Kansas's leading public health challenges.

The state health improvement plan is organized around three themes: Healthy Living, Healthy Communities and Access to Services. It includes five priority strategies, 15 objectives and more than 50 partner driven activities. This improvement plan outlines measurable targets for the state to improve the health of Kansans by 2020.

The assessment notes that poor nutrition and physical inactivity are the 2nd leading causes of premature death in Kansas. These behaviors have led to a doubling in Kansas obesity rates since 1980 as well as significant increases in certain chronic conditions such as diabetes, coronary artery disease, and hypertension. Cited report data reveals that "two out of every 3 Kansas adults and 1 in 4 youth are overweight or obese, accounting for more than \$650 million in health care costs in Kansas and driving the continued escalation of medical costs due to chronic disease." Poor nutrition and physical inactivity, it explains, are estimated to contribute to 15.2% of deaths (3,700 people) per year in Kansas.

The following summarizes the report's most significant farm-to-fork food system related strategy, goal, and objective, and the corresponding activities proposed by Healthy Kansans 2020 stakeholders to advance them.

Priority Strategy One: "Promote healthy eating and physical activity in Kansas through increased access to farmer's markets and community gardens and through food policy councils and a growing network of schools, worksites and early childhood care providers."

Justification for strategy one: "Individuals with access to healthy foods-farmers' markets, produce stands and/or stores with a high level of healthy selections had a greater odds of consuming at least one serving of vegetables per day."

First listed goal for strategy one: Increase access to healthy foods

First listed objective for goal one, strategy one: Increase local food sourcing

Benchmarks for this objective:

- By 2020, **increase the number of farmers markets** per 100,000 state residents (3.4 in 2012)
- By 2020, **increase the number of state and local food policy councils** (Baseline: 0 state, 1 local in 2011)
- By 2020, **increase the percent of Kansas middle schools and high schools that have planted a school food or vegetable garden** (Baseline: 13% in 2012)

Activities for this objective:

- Establish new, and expand existing, farmer's markets
- Promote and support access to and use of EBTs in farmers markets
- Establish and support state and local food policy councils
- Promote and support farm-to-school and farm-to-institution programs and policies
- Promote and support school and community garden initiatives

The Kansas Health Assessment and Improvement Plan was published six months prior to the completion of *Feeding Kansas: Statewide Farm & Food Assessment with a Plan for Public Action*. The two assessments were conducted completely separately, but have notable overlap in their findings and objectives.