Geary County, KS

- **Population**
  - 37,030 in 2015

- **Median household income lower than KS average**
  - $45,176 compared to 51,872 in Kansas

- **More diverse than KS as a whole**
  - 69% identifying as white compared to 85% in Kansas

- **Younger than Kansas as a whole**
  - 26.4 median age of residents compared to 36 in Kansas
The Data

• 2014 Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan
  o A lack of available and affordable health food options
  o Access to healthy foods one of three priorities in improvement plan

• Food Desert
  o Four Census tracts in Geary County are considered food deserts

• Food insecurity rate
  o Most food insecure county in Kansas with 19.1% of population consider food insecure and 23.9% of children
Live Well Geary County

Live Well is organized for the purpose of inspiring and advancing policy, systems and environmental changes that make it easier for Geary County, Kansas residents to lead healthy lives.
“The Stars Aligned”
Formation

• On May 3rd, 2016 Resolution was passed by the City to create a food policy council with the purpose of promoting local food policy to promote access to and consumption of healthy food options in the City of Junction City and Surrounding Geary County.
Members
• We can have up to 15 members on the council
• Members include:
  • Lawyer, City Prosecutor
  • Community Representative
  • Producer, Farmers Market Vendor
  • K-State Research and Extension SNAP Ed
  • USD 475, restaurant entrepreneur
  • USD 475 Wellness Coordinator
  • Health Department
  • K-State Graduate Student, Legal Assistant for City of JC
  • City Commissioner
  • Past Commissioner and baseball team General Manager
First Things First

• Group scheduled a monthly standing meeting
• Bylaws were created
  o Members are staggered on one and two year terms for the first year
  o Members must be approved by the City Commission
  o Chair, Chair-Elect, and Secretary *Note: no Treasurer
• We knew we needed to assess the community strengths and weaknesses (specifically related to the food system) before we could suggest changes and start working towards our goals
Food Assessment

1. Primary data - survey for Geary County residents
2. Secondary Data - written report
3. FEAST event - qualitative data/“voice of the people”

Food Policy Council Member disseminating survey information at a community Halloween event
FEAST Event

- FEAST stands for Food, Education, Agriculture, Solutions, Together created by the Oregon Food Bank
- Agenda included:
  - Introduction to the Local Food System
  - Panel discussion – local producer, restaurant owner, food bank, K-State Extension
  - Facilitated dialog to address assets, gaps, and priorities
  - Formed three priority work groups
  - Shared Local Meal
Priority Groups

Production and Nutrition Education

Connecting Local Production to Local Retail and Consumers

Marketing and Awareness
Challenges

• Getting people to look at the “big picture” or the whole food system when food insecurity is a large issue in our community
• Manpower- growing our council from 10 to 15 people would put more boots on the ground
• FEAST challenge- Identifying priorities
Future of the Council

• Ultimately we want to influence and improve all sectors of the local food system
• We hope to use the Food Assessment to further the work being done in our community around healthy food access
Thank you to the City of Junction City and the Kansas Health Foundation for making our Food Policy Council possible!

• Sources:
  • US Census Bureau
  • Kansas Health Matters
  • Feeding America
  • U.S. Department of Agriculture

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