

Annual Report: 2015

Presented to the
City of Lawrence Commission

- DOUGLAS COUNTY -

FOOD POLICY COUNCIL



<http://www.douglas-county.com/sites/fpc>

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report has been prepared for the City of Lawrence Commission by Helen Schnoes, Douglas County Food Systems Coordinator, on behalf of the Douglas County Food Policy Council. Eileen Horn, City of Lawrence and Douglas County Sustainability Coordinator, along with Tresa Carter, Program Coordinator for Market Match, contributed to its creation.

A full or condensed presentation of this report or any of the programs highlighted herein is available to the Commission upon request.

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THE DOUGLAS COUNTY FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

- ✓ Established by the County Commission in 2010
- ✓ Convened as a joint City-County Council in 2013
- ✓ Identifies the benefits, challenges and opportunities for a successful food system
- ✓ Recommends local policies to support food system
- ✓ Represents a wide range of stakeholders in food system through Commission appointments



FOOD POLICY COUNCIL GOALS

- ✓ **Economy:** Economic development and entrepreneurial opportunities in local food production = jobs.
- ✓ **Wellness:** Improved health outcomes with access to wholesome foods.
- ✓ **Environment:** Improved environmental quality.
- ✓ **Equity:** Increased access to healthy food for all residents, regardless of income.

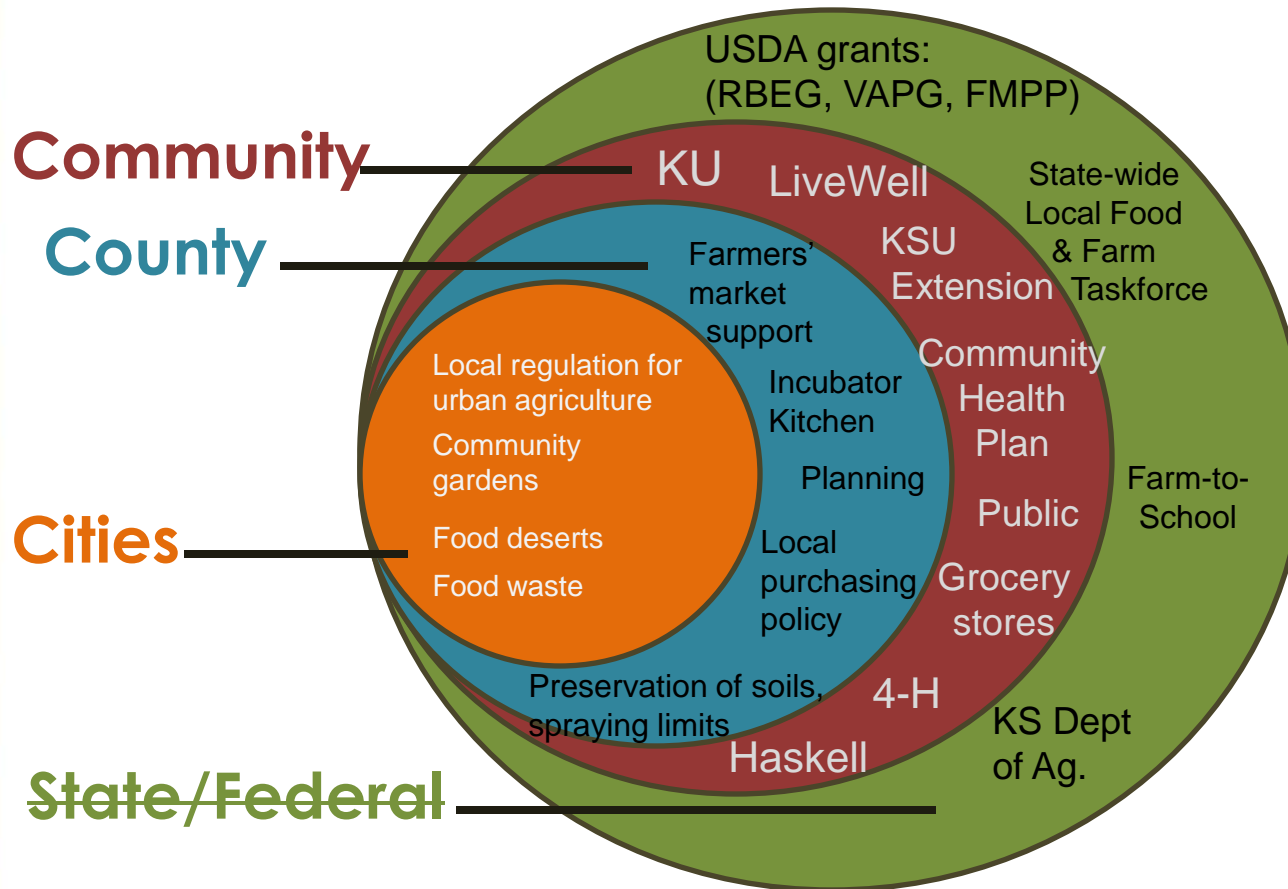


DCFPC REPRESENTATION AND CURRENT MEMBERS

Food System Sector (as stipulated in bylaws):	Representing:
At-Large: Appointed by Jim Flory	Lone Pine Ag Services Inc.
At-Large: Appointed by Mike Gaughan	TBD
At-Large: Appointed by Nancy Thellman	KC Healthy Kids
Agricultural Producer	Vesecky Family Farms
Agricultural Producer	Douglas County Farm Bureau
Agricultural Producer	Moon on the Meadow Farm
Retail Food Outlet	Merchants Pub and Plate
Institutional Food Purchaser	USD497
Education	KU Center for Sustainability
Extension Service	Douglas County Extension
NGO- Health/Nutrition/MD	Dietitian
NGO- Local Food Systems/Sustainable Ag.	The Kansas Rural Center
Youth Representative	Youth
Senior Food & Nutrition Programs	Douglas County Senior Services
At-Large (appointed by City)	Sunflower Foundation
At-Large (appointed by City)	Lawrence Douglas County Health Department
Agricultural Producer	Pendleton's
Retail Food Outlet	The Merc Community Market & Deli
Retail Food Outlet	Hy-Vee
City of Lawrence Sustainability Advisory Board	City of Lawrence
Food Security	Just Food
Established Farmer's Market in Douglas County	Downtown Lawrence Farmers Market
Business Community	Lawrence Chamber of Commerce

*Boldface indicates City of Lawrence appointees

COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEES



Much of the Council's work gets done within its three subcommittees that work at each level of local policy intervention: city, county, and community. Each of these subcommittees works with community partners and elected officials to advance our community's vision for regional and local foods.

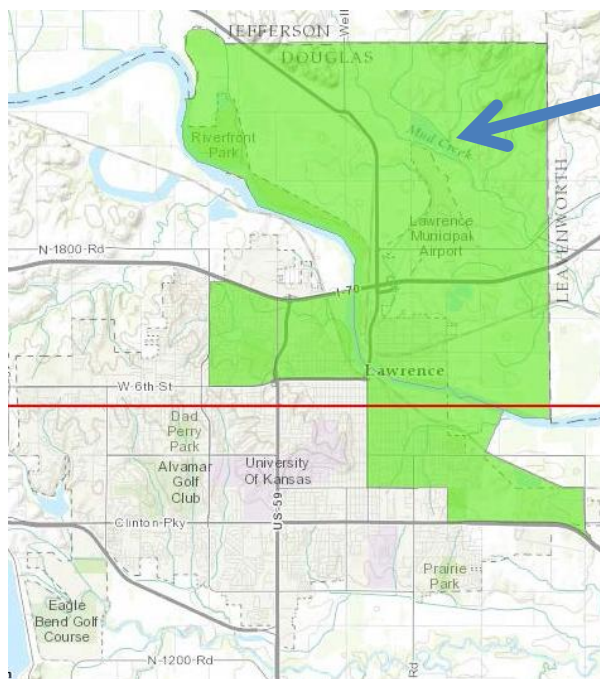
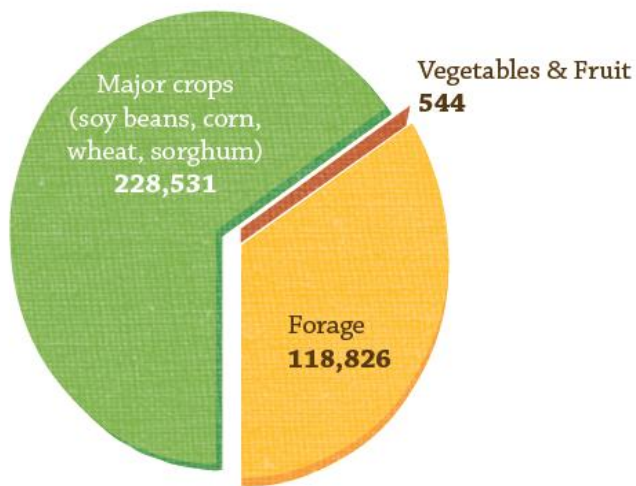
The FPC decided to "retire" the State/Federal committee in 2015. The FPC still engages with state or federal issues as relevant, and staff follow opportunities for grants, networking, and technical support from these levels.

The diagram on the left provides examples of the type of work that each subcommittee might pursue or the type of community partners with whom they may collaborate.

KEY COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEM ASSESSMENT RESULTS (2011)

Upon formation, the FPC undertook a study to *understand* the food system, partnering with K-State researchers. Some of the key findings included declining fruit and vegetable production in our rural areas and the presence of urban food deserts where citizens face limited access to grocery stores in their neighborhood—while over half of residents live with weight-related health concerns. The FPC also saw that an economic opportunity exists to develop a stronger regional food system and capture the local food dollar. These findings have guided the work of the FPC in the years since the study's release.

Production (in acres) by Crop



54%
OVERWEIGHT/OBESITY RATE

10,000+
RESIDENTS WITH LIMITED ACCESS TO GROCERY STORES & HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES

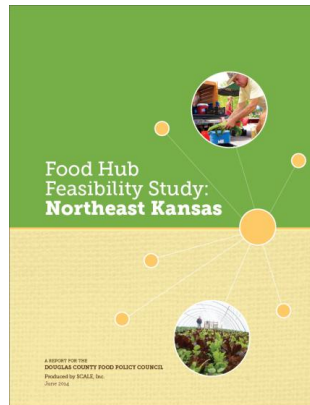
\$392 M
AMOUNT SPENT BY TRICOUNTY RESIDENTS ON FOOD PURCHASES EACH YEAR

<0.1%
FARMLAND IN OUR TRICOUNTY AREA DEVOTED TO VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

GRANTS:

- ✓ USDA Value-Added Producers (\$245,000)*
- ✓ KHF Implementation (\$40,000)*
- ✓ CDC Partnership to Improve Community Health (\$1.3 million)
- ✓ USDA Farmers' Market Promotion Program (\$53,650)
- ✓ Various for Market Match (\$49,251)



*Awarded to the farmers launching a regional food hub

COMMON GROUND PROGRAM

- ✓ Established 2012 and managed by Sustainability Coordinator with other city staff.
- ✓ Utilizes vacant, under-utilized city owned properties.
- ✓ FREE lease to community gardeners, market farmers.
- ✓ WIN-WIN for gardeners and farmers who need land and City staff tired of mowing vacant lots.

www.lawrenceks.org/common_ground

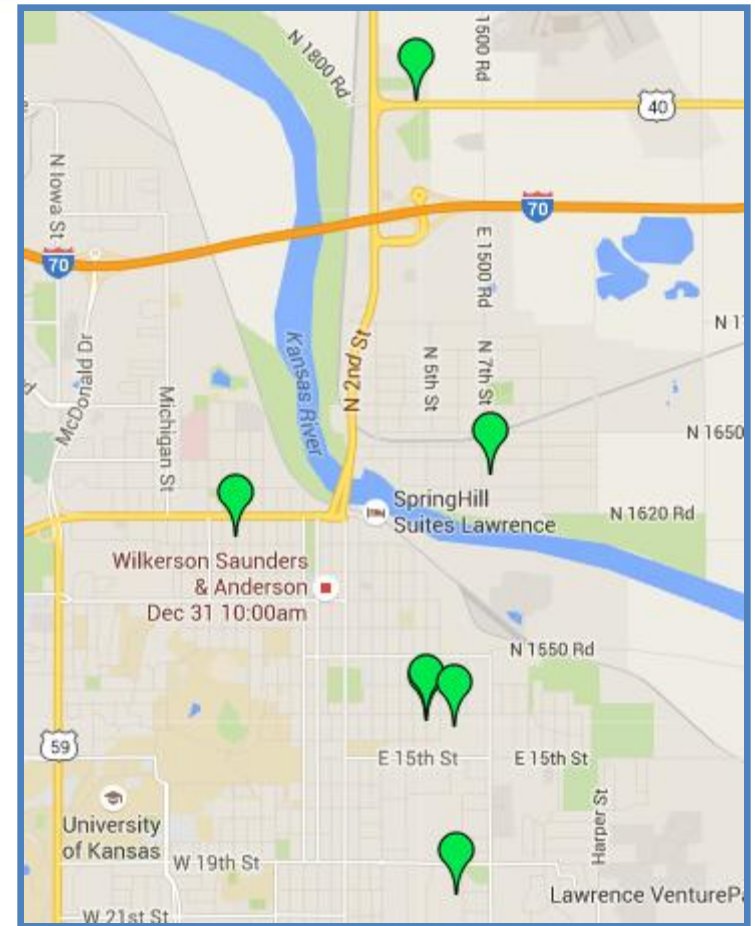
Community Partners for 2015

KU Alternative Breaks	Penn House
Baker U. Big Event	Kaw Valley Seed Fair
KU Rugby Team	Lawrence Public Library
Just Food	Douglas County Community Foundation
Ballard Center	LMCMS Student Gardeners
Sunrise Project	Bert Nash
KU Super Service Saturday	
Lawrence Community Shelter	



2015: COMMON GROUND PROGRAM

Number of gardens/farms: **10***
Number of gardeners/farmers: **186**
Number of community events/classes: **51**
Number of participants in events: **756**
Market value of produce sold: **\$54,300**
Pounds of produce donated: **#1,900**



*Two gardens are located at 13th and Pennsylvania St. Four gardens located at the Incubator Farm, near the airport.

FOOD HUB IDENTIFIED AS NEED

A key finding of the food system assessment was that we are missing much of the infrastructure “in the middle” that would link food producers with consumers. We lack food processing, packaging, warehousing, or food distribution facilities in our region that are at a large enough scale to serve our large institutional buyers (like schools). Also, we were reminded of the opportunity for economic development and job creation.

This led us to look for national best practices and opportunities to rebuild the processing and distribution components of our food system. Food Hubs stood out as a potential innovation to grow local economies (see diagram below). In 2013, we secured a USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant to conduct a feasibility study of a 16-county NE Kansas region to better understand how to support this underdeveloped sector of our food system.



Missing Infrastructure:
Processing
Canning
Freezing
Packaging
Distribution



FEASIBILITY STUDY IMPLEMENTATION

- ✓ The Food Hub Feasibility Study was conducted by SCALE, Inc. and released in June 2014
 - <http://www.douglascountyks.org/groups/fpc/media/food-hub-feasibility-study-full-report>
- ✓ December 2014 – November 2015: TA for producer steering committee from Douglas County & Kansas City area
 - Working with KU Small Business Development Center, K-State Research and Extension, DCFPC, and Lincoln University Extension
- ✓ December 2015:
 - Farm Fresh HQ registers as a KS Cooperative, with two of the founding farmers coming from Douglas County (www.freshfarmhq.com)
 - Hires Director to oversee food hub launch
- ✓ 2016 will be the pilot season
- ✓ Working Capital from:
 - \$40,000 Kansas Health Foundation Implementation Grant, received by the DCFPC and given to the food hub for start-up expenses
 - \$245,000 USDA Value-Added Producers Grant

PARTNERSHIP TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY HEALTH

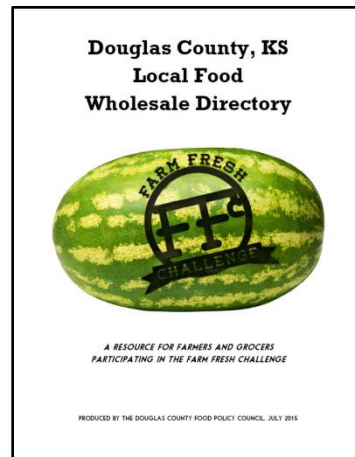
\$1.3 million CDC grant received by LDC Health Department: Grant period September 2014-2017

→ \$65,299 subcontracted to County for staff and programming for local foods efforts in 2015

→ Other work includes anti-tobacco and Safe Routes to School



*Helen Schnoes, MRP,
hired as full time Food
Systems Coordinator
hired to support PICH
efforts and DCFPC*



*Wholesale directory
for local farmers
and buyers created*



*August 2015 campaign with 6
county grocers to promote
local food and healthy eating;
City & County Proclamations*



*Developed local purchasing
guidelines with USD497*

<http://www.usd497.org/Page/7076>

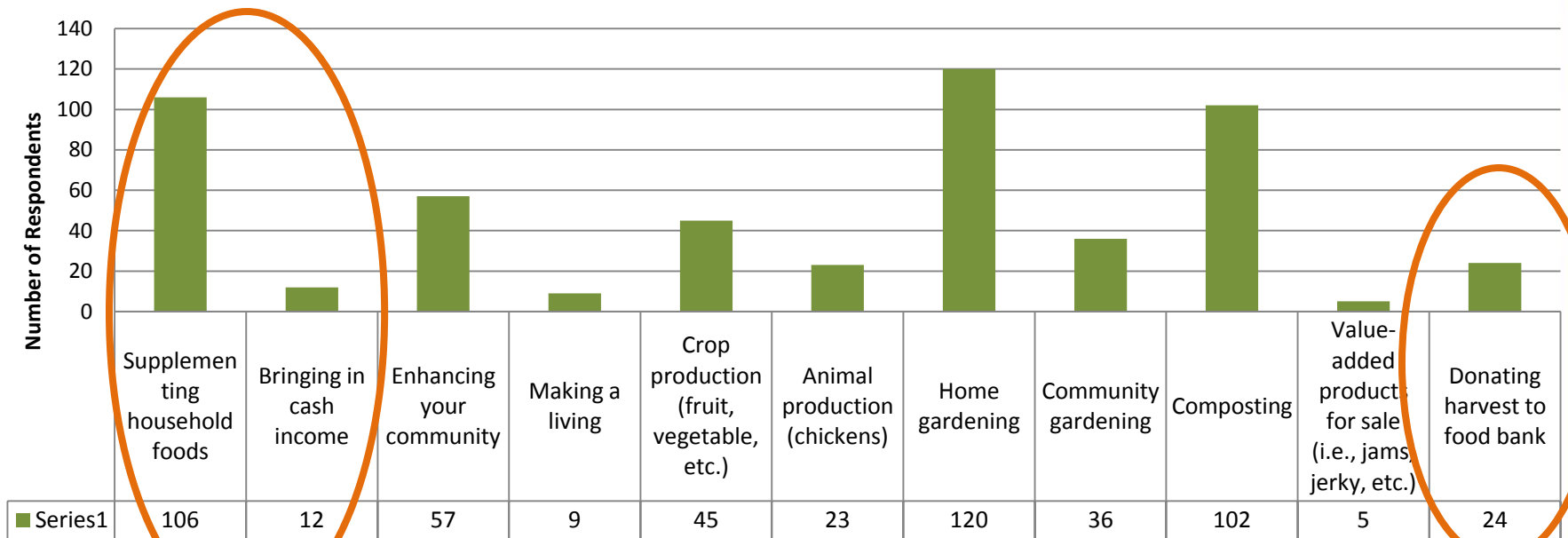
URBAN AGRICULTURE

- ✓ Working with Planning staff to expand support in Lawrence Development Code following the policy review initiated by the City Commission in June
- ✓ Community survey in August
- ✓ Public policy forum in September (over 40 attendees)
- ✓ Draft presented twice to Planning Commission for direction and feedback
- ✓ Changes may include allowing urban beekeeping, on-site sales, and clarification of allowed practices in residential areas
- ✓ Vote in February by Planning Commission?



PUBLIC INPUT SURVEY: CURRENT PRACTICES

If you practice urban agriculture, what best describes your core activities?



In the community survey, we asked about current practices and perceived policy barriers and opportunities. One clear finding we saw, that aligns with the City Commission's original impetus for reviewing urban ag policies, is the link between urban agriculture and food security. Growing food can allow income to be used on other basic necessities, or provide a supplementary source of income generation. Growing food for donations is also of interest to many in the community.

2015 MARKET MATCH SEASON

Market Match continued in 2015 for its second year. This program allows the users of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps) to redeem their assistance dollars at the farmers' market and then double the amount they can spend on local, healthy food. It launched in 2014 at the downtown Lawrence Farmers' Market and the Cottin's Hardware Farmers' Market. The program is overseen by staff with Douglas County.

How does the program work? A simple postcard explains below:



Swipe your Vision card at the market tent.

Pase su tarjeta Vision por la máquina EBT en el puesto de información del mercado.



We'll match what you spend, up to \$25 per market day.

Doblabremos el valor del dinero que gasta en el mercado hasta un máximo de \$25 por día.



Use the \$1 tokens to shop the market for fresh, local food.

Use las fichas de \$1 en el mercado para comprar alimentos frescos y cultivados localmente.

2015 MARKET MATCH SEASON

2015 presented successful expansion of the program. Thanks to support from the below funders, Market Match launched at four new markets outside of Douglas County, while still growing within Lawrence. In December, remaining Matching funds allowed for a holiday *TRIPLING* of food assistance at markets, with \$3000 redeemed.

The Clinton Parkway Farmers' Market in West Lawrence became authorized to conduct food stamp (SNAP) transactions and will join in 2016.

The cumulative match total will be around \$30,000 after winter markets—money these markets and farmers would not have received without the program.

Farmers Market	2014	2015
Lawrence Markets	\$8,881	\$12,166
Allen County	N/A	\$396
Atchison	N/A	\$736
Manhattan	N/A	\$4,695
Pittsburg	N/A	\$2,734
Match Total	\$8,881	\$20,727
SNAP + Match Total	\$17,934	\$40,278



Kansas Health Foundation



USER AND VENDOR FEEDBACK

“Eating healthy was expensive. But, now, it’s great.” –Market Match user



“The abundance of children shopping with their parents and learning [about] farming and producing wholesome products was great to see... It’s a WIN-WIN program!” –Market Match vendor

As the season wrapped up, program evaluation included a user focus group and paper surveys distributed to both users and vendors at each participating market.

USERS:

- ✓ 52% (16/32 respondents) indicated Market Match had importance in his/her decision to enroll in SNAP.
- ✓ Fruits & vegetables are the number one items purchased at the farmers market by SNAP users.

VENDORS:

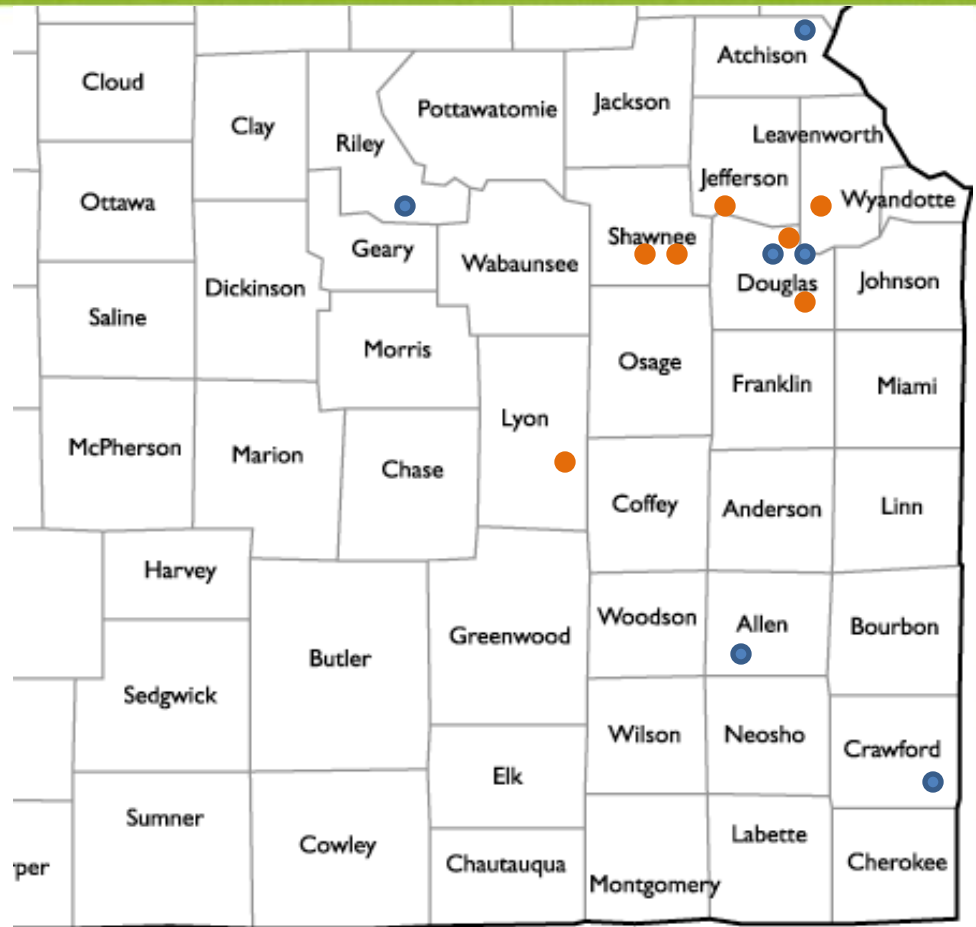
- ✓ 76% (38/50 respondents) agreed or strongly agreed there was an increase in SNAP customers compared to 2015
- ✓ 73% (38/52 respondents) agreed or strongly agreed that Market Match had a positive influence on revenue

2016 MARKET MATCH SEASON

Currently at **6** Markets
Expanding to **13** Markets

Funding fully secured for 2016!

In 2016, thanks to continued support from funders in our city and region, Market Match will continue to grow and support our local farmers and enable low-income residents to access healthy food.



COLLABORATIONS with EXTENSION

In 2011, the DCPFC launched Chefs Challenge at the County Fair, as a competition of three local chefs who highlight local products and prepare a dish for judges. This year, program oversight was transitioned to Master Gardeners and Master Food Volunteers.



Mayors of Eudora, Baldwin City, and Lecompton sample an eggplant dish prepared by Brad Brown, Bird Dog Bar

For several years, the DCFPC has worked to revise the policies at the kitchen in Building #21 to better support food entrepreneurs. To help spread the word, the kitchen was re-branded “Culinary Commons” as part of a push to spur use and enhance outreach.



**COOK.
CREATE.
INNOVATE.**

At Lawrence's community
incubator kitchen



culinarycommons.org

Marketing postcards and website in development

USDA FARMERS' MARKET PROMOTION PROGRAM GRANT

- ✓ Lawrence farmers' markets approached DCFPC because they identified a need for market data to inform decisions, ensure strong FM sector
- ✓ Received \$53,650 in funding from the USDA to conduct an in-depth analysis of our county's seven farmers' markets and consumer interests
 - November 2016: A consultant's report with strategic recommendations will be presented to the DCFPC, including individual plans for each market
 - 2017: Funding to hire TA support to help with market implementation
- ✓ Douglas County released a RFP in November and conducted interviews in January. The Board of County Commissioners has voted to prepare a contract with SCALE, Inc., who also produced the NE Kansas Food Hub Feasibility Study



OTHER KEY COUNCIL ACCOMPLISHMENTS in 2015

- ✓ Hosted Heartland Chapter of the Urban Sustainability Directors Network for workshop on urban agriculture
- ✓ Case study published by Growing Food Connections highlighting intergovernmental cooperation
 - <http://growingfoodconnections.org/comminnovat/healthy-food-system-in-the-heartland-intergovernmental-cooperation-in-the-city-of-lawrence-and-douglas-county-kansas-advances-food-policy/>
- ✓ Supported community members applying for local food and healthy eating grants
- ✓ Helped FPC and community members attend regional and national conferences
- ✓ Supported for new FPCs in KS (Jefferson, Franklin, Johnson, among others)

2016 OUTLOOK

- ✓ Horizon 2020 Issue Action Report tasks DCFPC to create Food Plan
- ✓ PICH Year 2 (\$65,000) brings expanded local foods communications and extension of Farm to School support into Eudora (Baldwin City in Year 3)
- ✓ Expand Common Ground by adding 2-3 new properties for lease and work with DCFPC to determine next steps
 - Continue “network” to share resources, knowledge
- ✓ 2016 Market Match expands to 13 markets, 3 more in Douglas County
- ✓ Execute county-wide farmers’ market study



WHERE WE MEET

- ✓ All Douglas County Food Policy Council meetings are open to the public—and our City Commissioners:
 - Full Council:* Third Monday each month, 6:30pm to 8:30pm
Location varies throughout our county food system
 - City:* Second Tuesday, 5:30pm, Lawrence Public Library
 - County:* Second Wednesday, 8:30am, The Merc
 - Community:* First Friday, 7:30am, The Merc
- ✓ Agendas, minutes, reports, and additional info online:
<https://www.douglascountyks.org/fpc/welcome>
- ✓ Subscribe for monthly agenda announcements:
<http://lawrenceks.org/subscriptions>

*Meeting time or location may change in some months



QUESTIONS?

For questions, feedback, and direction, contact DCFPC staff:

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