Improving Access to Healthy Food in Rural Communities

July 15, 2015 2:00 p.m. Eastern

Tawnya Laveta, Farm to Table
David Procter, Kansas State University’s Center for Engagement and Community Development
Pam Roy, Farm to Table and New Mexico Food and Agriculture Policy Council
Mikki Sager, The Conservation Fund
Grantmakers in Health Webinar
July 15, 2015

Kansas State University’s Rural Grocery Initiative”

R G I
Rural Grocery Initiative

Dr. David E. Procter, Director
Center for Engagement and Community Development
Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506

www.k-state.edu/cecd
www.ruralgrocery.org
(785) 532-6868
dprocter@ksu.edu
Mission:
To connect the resources and expertise of Kansas State University to the significant issues of public need facing Kansans and communities worldwide.
Kansas State University’s
Rural Grocery Initiative

Goals:
1. Identify challenges facing rural grocery stores (2,500 or less)
2. Develop responses to those challenges
3. Identify and detail sustainable business models of grocer operation
4. Build virtual and face-to-face information networks for rural grocers
Why Focus on Rural Food Retail?

Because,

Rural Grocery Stores Provide:

- **Economic Development**
  - Rural grocery stores are an important rural economic driver

- **Food Access**
  - Rural grocery stores provide a primary source of nutritious and competitively priced foods

- **Important Community Hubs**
  - Rural grocery stores provide important local, civic and social meeting spaces
Economic Development: Why Focus on Rural Grocery Stores

Because,

Rural grocery stores are a critical small business

1. Rural grocery stores in KS, on average, contribute $644,000 to the local economy.
2. Grocery stores are resilient businesses in economic downturn times
3. Kansas rural grocery stores provide, on average, 17 local jobs
   • 6 full time; 11 part time
4. Rural grocery stores in Kansas generate 1 out of every 5 tax dollars for local community
5. Locally-owned, small business have a larger economic multiplier
6. SNAP and WIC benefits provide economic stimulus
   • SNAP puts food dollars directly and indirectly into local economies.
   • Food Dollar Leakage: Local grocery stores are critical to capture SNAP dollars
Healthy Food Access: Why Focus on Rural Grocery Stores

Because,
8% of rural population (Approx. 4.75 million people) in the U.S. are living in communities lacking access to healthy foods. (Policy Link; Food Trust, 2013)

- **Poverty:** 20% of census tract is below poverty level.
- **Lack of Access:** 33% of the census tract's population resides more than 10 miles from a supermarket or large grocery store.
Healthy Food Access: Why Focus on Rural Grocery Stores?

Because,

1. Rural areas suffer the highest obesity rates in the nation.
2. Rural grocery stores offer more healthy foods, at lower cost, than rural convenience stores.
3. Prevalence of grocery stores in non-metro counties is inversely associated with incidence of obesity.
4. Rural grocery stores are often a distribution point for locally-sourced foods.
   1. Provides support for local producers
   2. Provides site for fresh produce sales
Community Hubs: Why Focus on Rural Grocery Stores

- Functions as anchor of community life
  - Helps form community identity
  - Develops and maintains social contacts

- Provides a place for talking with one another
  - A place for small talk
  - A place to talk about current affairs – local and national
  - A community gathering space

- Creates habits of public association
Rural Grocer Survey: Top Seven Challenges

Rural Grocer Challenges:
Percent of Owners Identifying Each Challenge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Percent of Owners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competition with Big Box Stores</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Costs</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Issues</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governmental Regulations</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Community Support</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Sales Volume</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Minimum Buying Requirement</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommendation #1: Build Community Investment in Rural Food Access

Conduct **FEAST** events:

- A facilitated deliberation about community food system based on community assets
- Brings together wide diversity of community food stakeholders
- Builds community investment resulting in change actions to make community more food secure.
Recommendation #2: Address Food Distribution Challenges

Explore / facilitate / energize innovative food distribution systems

- More conversation is necessary. Possible options:

- Regional re-distribution centers
- Rural grocery stores serving as food hubs
  - Establish collaborations among rural grocery stores and farmers’ markets
  - Establish collaborations among rural grocery owners and local growers
  - Create value-added food market opportunities
Recommendation #3: Provide Technical Assistance for Grocery Operations

1. Provide T/A for Rural Grocery Operations
   - Develop Case Studies of Sustainable Rural Grocery Business Models
   - Provide Technical Assistance for Specific Business Operational Needs
     • Rural Grocery Toolkit (http://www.ruralgrocery.org/resources/)

2. Invest in Information Network Portals
   - Virtual Network Portals
     • Websites, webinars, etc
   - Face-to-Face Information Networks
     • Conferences, summits, etc
Thank You

Dr. David E. Procter, Director
Center for Engagement & Community Development
Kansas State University
(785) 532-6868
www.k-state.edu/cecd
www.ruralgrocery.org
dprocter@k-state.edu
Growing Rural Food Access
Why We Use the Triple Bottom Line Approach

NC Department of Commerce Tier Designations:
1 (blue) = most economically distressed
3 (yellow) = most affluent

All Tier One counties are rural
2012 NC Health Outcomes

Source: countyhealthrankings.org
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation & University of Wisconsin, Population Health Institute
2010 Food Insecurity Rates

Source: Feeding America, *national network of food banks*
Conventional Wisdom: Attributes environmental degradation to landfills, hog farms, chemical plants, land conversion, etc.

Rural Reality: Social and economic stresses are the root causes of community decisions that lead to environmental degradation

- Poverty
- Racism, class-ism, sexism & other “isms”
- Power imbalances
- Wealth disparities
- Disenfranchised communities
- Low educational attainment
- Poor health outcomes and conditions
The Conservation Fund

- Sustainable Programs: People
- Conservation Ventures: Prosperity
- Land Conservation: Planet

- Resourceful Communities
- Shade Fund
- Working Forest Fund
- Natural Capital Investment Fund

Conservation Leadership Network

Strategic Conservation Planning

Freshwater Institute
Rural Food Access Goals

People: Social Justice

Prosperity: Sustainable Economic Development

Planet: Landownership, Environmental Stewardship
New Markets in Low-Income Communities

• “You Choose” grocery boxes purchased with SNAP / EBT and Double Bucks

• 21 Black farmers producing meats, dairy, vegetables and fruits delivered to churches, schools, communities

• Undergoing due diligence for NCIF loan to purchase and renovate meat processing facility and serve farmer cooperatives

Coalition for Healthier Eating
Flipping Rural Prisons and Young Lives

• Partnered with NC prison system, 99-year lease
• 130 acres plus buildings
• Sustainable agriculture training for military veterans and adjudicated youth
• Youth agro-enterprises (vermiculture, aquaponics) and food distribution to neighbors
• Youth leadership development

growingchange.org
“Food as Medicine”

• Faith-based youth and adult development programming

• 25-acre community garden and bee farm managed by youth and parents

• Harvesting / sharing of produce and honey with community

• Youth food enterprises, 15 certified beekeepers and scholarships for participants
Growing Food, Trees and Community Wealth

- TCF bought forestland in Fort Stewart buffer, and sold a conservation easement

- McIntosh SEED purchased 1,148+ acres ($1.6 million worth of land) from TCF for $689,000

- Sustainable timber harvests, agro-forestry (crops, small livestock) production, ecotourism development, landowner education and sweetgrass propagation
Strengthening Markets and Farm Operations

- **Grain Storage Bins:** State funding used to subsidize loans to limited-resource farmers for grain storage bins. Higher income through crop sales at higher markets.

- **Food Hubs:** Loans and technical assistance for start-up operations, facilities, equipment, trucks, etc. Increased farm income and efficiency.

- Technical assistance and patient capital open otherwise inaccessible doors.
People and Communities: Social Justice

- Food is both a need and a natural catalyst for organizing in rural communities. Grassroots groups and faith groups, are reaching the most vulnerable rural populations but have suffered the largest losses of funding.

- Capacity-building support, access to resources and connections to peers add significant value to small grant investments in grassroots groups.

- Foundation partnerships can provide the critical match funds needed to leverage federal agency investments.

Lessons Learned
Prosperity through Sustainable Economic Development

• Small grants provide the critical first step in supporting grassroots rural organizations and communities in growing food access through programs and asset-building approaches.

• Access to loan capital, combined with business skills development, capacity building and new market development are critical to help under-resourced farmers, businesses and organizations grow food access and achieve sustainability.

Lessons Learned
Planet: Landownership and Environmental Stewardship

• Land (ownership and control) is power in rural America – social, economic, political – and the key to self-determination and environmental sustainability.

• Land and water provide the infrastructure for food production, recreation, healthy lifestyles, and quality of life.

• Partnering with rural and environmental funders can leverage resources to help communities acquire, manage and steward land, and create or retain wealth.

Lessons Learned
QUESTIONS?

Mikki Sager
The Conservation Fund

msager@conservationfund.org
919-949-5687
Creating Community Resiliency through Rural Food Access Initiatives in NM

For Grantmakers In Health Webinar

July 15, 2015

By Farm to Table in New Mexico
New Mexico

- 2 million people

- 22 Sovereign Nations
- 121,000 sq mi
- 17 people/ sq mi
- $23,700 per capita income
- 20% below poverty level
Navajo Nation - 1 hr trip to nearest grocery store

Background Work: 2006-2009 NM’s Rural Food Gap
- FTT & NM Food & Ag Policy Council

Closing New Mexico’s Food Gap: A report on food access in New Mexico

Submitted to Governor Richardson and the New Mexico State Legislature by the NM Food Gap Task Force
November 30, 2008
Navajo Nation
Low Income &
Low Food Access

10 full service grocery stores in Navajo Nation

USDA Food Access Research Atlas
> 10 miles to a grocery store

New Mexico
Low Income &
Low Food Access
Navajo Nation- 300,000 members-2015

Diabetes affecting NN- 25,000 w/ Type 2
75,000 pre-diabetic

-Indian Health Services

PIH.org COPE Navajo article

The Navajo, like many other American Indians and Alaska Natives, struggle with some of the worst health outcomes in the United States. Forty percent of Navajo Nation adults smoke, compared to 19% of adult White Americans. Indian Health Services -Diné Food Sovereignty Report- 2014
Addressing Food Access Challenges from the ground, UP: Market approaches meet Lifeways
Ancient Waters Farm

La Madera, NM

Get to know your LOCAL Farmer!

¡Conoce a tu granjero!

Name: Alcides and Erin Ortigoya

Farm: Ancient Waters Farm

Size: about 10 acres

Location: La Madera, NM

Main Crops: carrots, beets, zucchini, melons, cucumbers, lettuce, greens

Cultivos Principales: zanahorias, betabelles, calabacitas, melones, pepinos, lechuga y verduras.

Ancient Waters Farm is a small family farm in northern NM where many different types of fruits and vegetables grow. Ancient Waters Farm has been growing carrots, cucumbers and a variety of other fruits and vegetables for 2 years. You and your family can find these foods at local restaurants, farmers markets, grocery stores, and your school cafeteria.

Ancient Waters Farm is a granja de granos que cultiva variedades de frutas y verduras. Las papas, el pepino y una variedad de tubérculos que se cultivan en el campo puede ser encontrado en los supermercados, y también en la cafetería.

The fresh fruits and vegetables you eat in the communities of La Madera,

Las frutas y verduras frescas que se consumen en la comunidad de La Madera,

Ancient Waters Farm has been growing school-communities since 2015. By helping to ensure that folks across the state have access to fresh produce in the places they live,

Ancient Waters Farm has cultivado comunidades escolares desde 2015. Ayudando a asegurar que los residentes tengan acceso a alimentos frescos en los lugares donde viven.

SUCCESS STORIES FROM THE FIELD

New Mexico Guide to Business & Financial Resources

for Food System Entrepreneurs

2011

For Farmers • Ranchers

Value-Added Producers

Processors • Distributors

Retailers & Other

Allied Entrepreneurs

A PROJECT OF FARM TO TABLE

La Montañita Fund

investing in community

LA MONTAÑITA

FUND
Food Access Initiatives:

- Food Buying Clubs

Ojo Encino, Torreon, Counselor Chapters

Food Sovereignty beyond food access becomes the goal.

2011-DCAA visits Chapters regarding policy opportunities to improve Navajo health & wellness: *Propose junk food tax to fund wellness projects*
COPE, Navajo Division of Health, Community Health Representatives develop food literacy, family-based wellness trainings -2009-current

COPE receives minigrants for Navajo/Zuni garden projects from Con Alma Health Foundation -Healthy People, Healthy Places program
April 2014
DCAA/Díné Food Sovereignty Alliance wins Council support for junk food tax but vetoed by President; amendment removes 5% sales tax on Fresh Fruits & Vegetables

November 2014:
Signed 2% tax on junk foods to fund wellness projects in 110 Chapters

May 2015
Implemented tax changes
Now designing Wellness Projects grant program

2% tax estimated to raise $1M annually
Clinical teams, CHR providing wellness trainings to families, prescribing FVRx

C-stores assessments, T&TA to implement new tax law and participate in FVRx

T&TA for Navajo growers to sell produce and Traditional Foods at C-stores, FVRx

Navajo Food Policy Toolkit created for Navajo groups to navigate food system challenges and advocate for change

NCHO youth leadership cohort promoting healthy living and community projects

COPE receives CDC REACH grant, 2014 ~ $1M over 3 yrs with coalition partners
Insights from Food Access Coalition Work

Community-determined values & strategies are essential for defining food access/wellness approaches & outcomes with diverse public & private partners.

Coalition partners must build trust to honestly dialogue about equitable use of Power & Resources for short-term & long-term goals & continue this dialogue as a practice.

Each group, each sector, each person brings unique worldviews, initiatives, tools that can converge to create holistic changes in many lives: Respect each one & honor the ongoing process of learning about one another.

Listen first; then determine the best you can contribute each moment, keep your word, reflect w/ others.
Recommendations for Grantmakers

#1

Invest in *relationship development* among diverse, new & existing collaborative partners *while* investing in people to fully develop projects, policy upgrades, and *community-determined goals and processes*
Commit time & money to project partners \textit{at least 5 years}:

--Get to know them and their work
--Collaborate w/ diverse grantmakers to fund holistic activities from ground, up & across lifeways and sectors.
--Commit to your respective funding domain while investing with a collaboration of grantmakers (public, private, donors); learn from one another’s experience and from grantees in real time, not from interim/final reports.
Recommendations for Grantmakers

#3

Consider if your foundation’s interest bearing investments capitalize economic activities that negatively impact human and environment health, wellness & vitality.

--If so, divest and become a greater force of transformation with grantees and their respective communities.
Farm to Table
Pam Roy, Executive Director
Tawnya Laveta, Program Director
www.farmtotablenm.org
Phone: 505-473-1004
• More webinars on this topic?

• New topics you want to tackle or learn more about?

• Innovative work that you want to share?

• A question you want to pose to your colleagues?

Contact us at (heal)@gih.org