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Southeast Kansas Farm-to-Fork Summit

Those interested in the future of Kansas farms, food and communities are invited to join the [Kansas Rural Center](#) and the Allen County Growing Rural Opportunities Works Council (GROW) for the Southeast KS Farm-to-Fork Summit on Thursday, May 29, in Iola, KS. The event will be held at the Fellowship Regional Church, 214 W Madison , from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

After the Southeast Farm-to-Fork Summit May 29, stick around for Family Fun Night at the Allen County Farmers Market just one block from Fellowship Regional Church! The market will be open from 5:30 to 7:00 pm that evening. Visit area farmers and participate in fun activities for the whole family!

The Southeast Kansas Farm-to-Fork Summit is the second in a series of regional summits to take place across Kansas this spring and summer that will engage communities in dialogue about the current environment around Kansas farms, food, and community health. The first summit was held in [Greensburg, Kansas, on April 29](#) and focused on community food and water policy.

The full-day summit in Iola will provide the opportunity for participants to network with others who share similar interests or concerns for their communities, learn about local and state policy and advocacy for community food and health, and share and take back ideas to their own communities.

The day will be focused on understanding specific policies that will help our state's farmers help make healthful foods, especially fruits and vegetables, the easy, accessible, affordable choice for all Kansans. A key theme will include the ability for food policy councils and other community food policies to affect local farm and economic development as well as improve the health of Kansans.

In the morning, the Kansas Rural Center (KRC) and GROW Allen County will provide information about their initiatives followed by a panel of Southeast Kansas farmers growing and marketing in the region, health professionals and other community experts. Panelists will tell the story of the regional food system and community health, which will set the stage for late morning and early afternoon dialogue.

GROW Allen County is an organization that seeks to grow rural opportunities and will soon be launching a Food Policy Council for their county. In the afternoon roundtable discussions, participants will have the opportunity to voice feedback on several different policy ideas that could help existing and developing Food Policy Councils and communities advance the vision desired for the farm and food future. One of the several afternoon roundtables will focus on the development of Allen County's Food Policy Council. GROW Allen County will be looking for specific feedback from local residents and Kansans from all over the state on ideas for the county's council.

Registration for this summit is \$15 per person which includes lunch. Lunch will be provided at noon by [Food that Hits "The Spot"](#) a new local food truck in Iola. The Spot will include ingredients in the meal sourced from local farms.

Please register at kansasruralcenter.org/southeast-ks-farm-to-fork-summit to attend the summit. Registration reimbursement is available through [Thrive Allen County](#). To apply, call 620-365-8128.

The next Farm-to-Fork Summit will be held in Colby, Kansas June 25. Check back soon for more information and registration for this and other summits across the state at kansasruralcenter.org.

These summits are part of the Kansas Rural Center's "Community Food Solutions for a Healthier Kansas" initiative that will seek to advance the farm-to-fork food system across the state during the next three years. This year KRC and their partners will help develop the Statewide Farm-to-Fork Assessment and Policy Recommendations. The Assessment and Recommendations will be used as a tool to help identify specific barriers, opportunities and policies needed to advance the farm-to-fork vision identified by state, regional, and local grassroots constituents working in all realms of the food system.

The Allen County Growing Rural Opportunities Works Council was formed to help strengthen healthy food access and production, enhance economic development, support small business development, and strive to form a food policy council for Allen County. For more information about the Council and their work contact Debbie Bearden at 620-365-2172.

The Kansas Rural Center is a non-profit organization that since 1979 has promoted the long-term health of the land and its people through research, education, and advocacy that advances economically viable, ecologically sound, and socially just food and farming systems. For more information about the Kansas Rural Center visit www.kansasruralcenter.org.

For more information about KRC's Community Food Solutions" initiative visit kansasruralcenter.org/community_food_solutions or contact Initiative Coordinator, Natalie Fullerton at 402-310-0177 or nfullerton@kansasruralcenter.org.