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KRC to Reveal Farm & Food System Assessment at Conference

The Kansas Rural Center will release **Feeding Kansas: Statewide Farm & Food System Assessment with a Plan for Public Action** during the 2014 Farm and Food Conference and 35th Anniversary Celebration, Nov. 7 and 8, in Manhattan, Kansas, at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel.

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The report will be released during a 90 minute session on November 8 at 2:00 pm. The session, titled **Advocating for Action**, will be led by KRC Executive Director, Julie Mettenburg, KRC Program Coordinator and author of the report, Cole Cottin, and KRC Program Coordinator, Natalie Fullerton. Attendees will receive a print version of the report's executive summary, an electronic copy of the full report, and an opportunity to discuss and ask questions.

Feeding Kansas was produced by the Kansas Rural Center through its three year "Community Food Solutions" initiative which seeks to advance the capacity of Kansas farms to feed Kansas people, thereby potentially improving Kansas's economy, community, environment, and health status.

The report calls for the advancement of a "farm-to-fork" food system that better incorporates Kansas farms into the supply chain that provides healthful foods to Kansans. The report and its seven recommendations for action and policy change are the product of more than a year spent engaging hundreds of individuals across Kansas in dialogue about current opportunities and barriers in the farm-to-fork food system, with a goal of making healthful foods the routine, easy choice for all Kansans.

Despite Kansas's important role in agricultural production for national and global markets, people with limited access to quality food due to distance and economic factors live in all 105 Kansas counties. A 2010 Healthy Eating Index assessment found that more than 92 percent of Kansans are consuming a nutritionally imbalanced diet. The report emphasizes that feeding the world must include feeding more Kansans.

Increasing consumption of Kansas raised healthful foods within Kansas would have significant economic and health impacts. If every resident purchased just \$5 of food direct from Kansas farms each week, those farms would earn \$750 million in new revenue. At current sales tax rates, that could equate to more than \$46 million in state revenue and up to \$15 million in local and county tax revenue.

Over the next two years, the Kansas Rural Center will work with many partners and a growing grassroots network to advocate for the enactment of the public policy recommendations set forth in this report.

Those who are interested in participating in the report's debut are invited to register for the conference and attend the Advocating for Action session. Saturday's conference program will also showcase three keynote speakers including Ricardo Salvador, Director and Senior Scientist at Union of Concerned Scientists; Bob Dixon, Mayor, City of Greensburg; and Hattie Mitchell, Treasurer, Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation. Keynotes from both days will gather for a panel at lunch to reflect the next 35 years of sustainability in farming, food, and communities.

Nine workshops and over 20 experts will lead sessions providing inspiring ideas, helpful information and valuable connections for attendees, ranging from practical farm management diversification and transition strategies, to community and school gardening.

The conference begins at 9 am on Friday, and includes a 35th anniversary dinner celebration Friday evening, with an author book signing, music, silent auction and locally sourced food.

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The full program agenda can be accessed online at <http://kansasruralcenter.org/2014-conference-agenda/>

KRC invites farmers, ranchers, food enthusiasts, community advocates, and more to attend its 2014 Farm &

Food Conference and 35th Anniversary Celebration.

Cost to attend the conference is \$55 per day, \$45 for a 35th Anniversary Dinner ticket, or \$145 for both days and the dinner. Registration for each day includes lunch featuring local ingredients and snacks. For special student and beginning farmer rates, contact Natalie Fullerton at nfullerton@kansasruralcenter.org or 402-310-0177.

Conference registration is open through November 3, 2014 at, kansasruralcenter.org/calendar/conference-2014.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU IN MANHATTAN! [REGISTER NOW](#)

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