Supporting Rural Grocery Stores Across the North Central Region

November 7, 2022, 2 -3:30 PM

Rial Carver, Program Leader
Rural Grocery Initiative
Rural Grocery stores provide:

• Economic development
• Public health benefits
• Community gathering space
Economic Development
Public Health
Over a 10-year period between 2008 and 2018, 105 grocery stores in rural Kansas have closed their doors, in half of those communities a new store has not opened.

**Challenges:**

- High operating costs
- Slim profit margins
- Competition
- Population decline
- Distribution
- Transition Planning

Kansas Rural Grocery Stores, 2019
Food access in the North-Central Region

Source: PolicyMap, Low Access census tracts (USDA, 2019)
Rural Grocery Initiative

The Rural Grocery Initiative aims to sustain locally-owned rural grocery stores to enhance community vitality and improve access to healthy foods by identifying, developing, and sharing resources that support grocers and rural communities.
What does RGI do?

• Provides individual, one on one technical assistance to grocers and communities related to rural grocery stores and/or healthy food access

• Conducts research on relevant rural grocery and food access issues

• Develops and maintains informational resources

• Hosts educational events including the biennial National Rural Grocery Summit

• Serves as Food Access Organization for Kansas Healthy Food Initiative
Technical Assistance

Provided support to 33 states

RGI responds to 180 TA inquiries per year

- General Program Inquiry: 24.3%
- Business Development: 16.7%
- Funding: 15.5%
- Other: 7.2%
- Ownership Models: 6.5%
- Grocery Operations: 6.1%
- Economics: 6.1%
- Partnerships: 5.3%
- Technology: 4.4%
- Competition: 3.1%
- Education: 1.5%
- Distribution: 1.4%
- Policy: 0.9%
- Marketing: 0.9%
The Grocery Business Transition Mentorship Program provides rural Kansans with in-depth, customized technical assistance on a range of topics related to grocery business transitions, such as creating a business plan, assessing markets and community needs, establishing a community-owned grocery store, and more.

**Completed:**
- April to June 2021
- Sept. to November 2022

**Upcoming:**
- January to March 2023
- April to June 2023

Find more on the Mentorship Program at [www.ruralgrocery.org/mentor](http://www.ruralgrocery.org/mentor)
Research

- **Rural Grocery Survey**, 2008 and 2021

- Expanding healthy food access by strengthening social capital, 2017

Informational Resources

For those establishing a rural grocery store:

- Step One: Assessing the Market
- Step Two: Getting Started
- Step Three: Legal Requirements & Licensing
- Step Four: Financing
- Step Five: Marketing Your Business

For existing rural grocery store owners:

- Market Assessment
- Business Organization
- Financial
- Business Management
- Food Suppliers
- Marketing

Find the RG toolkit at https://www.ruralgrocery.org/rural-grocery-toolkit/Overview.html
Informational Resources

Find more under the Publications tab at www.ruralgrocery.org
Events

WEBINAR SERIES

Keeping Groceries Alive: Successful Ownership Transitions for Rural Grocery Stores

1. Grocery Business Transition Planning: An Overview
2. Understanding Grocery Ownership Models
3. Preparing for Business Transition
4. Assessing Markets & Community Needs
5. Planning your Business
6. Funding the Transition
7. Recruiting Store Managers
8. Mastering Grocery Store Nuts & Bolts

Find more info and recordings under the events tab at www.ruralgrocery.org

Rural Grocery Succession Planning

Monthly Webinars

1. Business Transition Overview
2. Business Valuation 101
3. Transitioning a Small Format Grocery Store
4. Beyond Grocery
5. Purchaser Perspectives
6. Consumer Cooperatives
7. Worker Cooperatives
8. Grocery-Municipal Partnerships

Upcoming:
November 17 & December 15: Register Here
The National Rural Grocery Summit

• 2-day convening
• Over 240 registered attendees from 35 states + D.C.
• Over 50 presentations including
  • 4 keynotes,
  • 5 breakout sessions (with 1-3 presentations each) with
  • 3 tracks,
  • documentary screening,
  • poster session

Find more information online at www.ruralgrocery.org/summit
Kansas Healthy Food Initiative

The Kansas Healthy Food Initiative is a public-private partnership that aims to increase access to affordable healthy food to improve the health and economic development of Kansans and their communities.
Rural Grocery Specialist Certificate

What: an online certificate program to train resource providers to better support rural grocers through business transition. This project is supported by a grant from the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development.

Who: extension professionals, economic developers and other resource providers who support rural grocers and rural community vitality in their positions.

Anticipated Modules
1. Assessment of Grocer Attitudes & Relationship Building
2. Transition Planning Foundations
3. Business Valuation Fundamentals
4. Communicating About Transition
5. Finding New Ownership
6. Buyer Funding & Hiring a Manager
7. Into the Future

Project Development Timeline
- November 2022: RGI hosts two informational sessions with Subject Matter Experts. The same content will be provided at both sessions.
- December 2022 to February 2023: Content Creators develop video outlines and record video lessons with support from RGI.
- March 2023: RGI finalizes first draft of course content in learning management system.
- April to June 2023: RGI offers Pilot Program.
- July 2023: RGI finalizes program content for public launch.
- August 2023: Public launch.

Interested in learning more? Email us at rgi@ksu.edu
Thank you!

Rural Grocery Initiative
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www.ruralgrocery.org