



**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

**2020**

**Culture of Health  
Report**

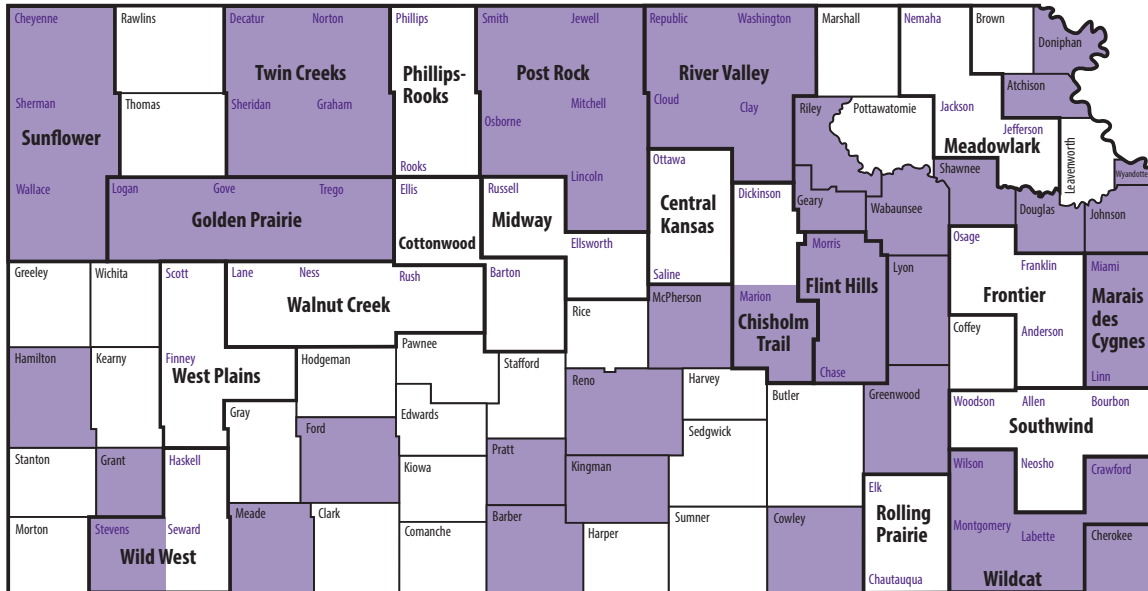
# Culture of Health explained

K-State Research and Extension is working to build and sustain a culture of health across Kansas. A recent large-scale initiative provided mini-grants to 31 teams who proposed community-based strategies that would support the health and well-being of Kansans. The teams were comprised of extension agents and their community partners, including public health offices, hospitals, schools, libraries, cities, farmers' markets, coalitions, and more. This initiative was completed in August 2020.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation describes a Culture of Health as a community where:

- » Health flourishes for all
- » Health is a social value
- » We have healthy environments in which to live, work, learn, and play
- » Health care doesn't burden the economy
- » We make proactive healthy choices
- » Health care is available to all

31 teams in the counties and districts highlighted in purple participated in Culture of Health projects.



# Helping improve Kansas communities through...

- » Community gardens
- » Micro-food pantries and blessing boxes
- » Water bottle filling stations in schools
- » Walking trails and sidewalks
- » Summer meal programs in rural communities
- » Installing exercise equipment in low-income housing areas
- » Providing behavioral health support to Kansas youth and adults and much more



Initiatives served  
more than **24,000**  
Kansans



*Student at Riverton Elementary School in Cherokee County refills his water bottle at fountain provided through Culture of Health funding.*



*New sidewalks were laid in Pratt County as a result of Culture of Health grants.*



*River Valley District utilized Culture of Health grants to create wellness boxes providing food access to underserved residents.*

Achieving a culture of health is a cultural shift that takes persistence, ongoing effort, fruitful partnerships, and funding. As an organization, K-State Research and Extension is dedicated to this ongoing pursuit. Our local teams have sustainability and growth plans in place. To-date, an additional \$840,045 has been secured by the local teams to further support or expand culture of health strategies.

***Together we can build a healthier Kansas.***

# A story on improving lives through access to healthy foods

Until recently, pockets of Kansas City were considered food deserts, meaning locals did not have access to healthy foods because of the distance to grocery stores, or the difficulty of getting to those stores.

To address this concern, extension agents in Wyandotte County partnered with The Merc Co+op, a consumer owned cooperative grocery store. “We used our Culture of Health grant to work with the Unified Government and the Merc and other organizations in the county, so we could listen to the community and engage them as we began this project,” said Nozella Brown, Director of K-State Research and Extension’s Wyandotte County office.

At a recent groundbreaking for the store, Kansas City, Kan., mayor David Alvey called the moment “special because so many people of goodwill for many years and against many challenges sustained a passion to bring a grocery store to the people of our downtown neighborhoods.”

Despite COVID-19 challenges, the Merc Co+op opened in late July 2020. The store serves approximately 27,000 residents who currently live in areas considered food deserts.

To read the full story, visit [ksre-learn.com/kc-food-insecurity](https://ksre-learn.com/kc-food-insecurity).



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