



**Kansas Farmers Markets**  
**House Committee on Agriculture and National Resources**  
**January 25, 2011**

Chairman Powell and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to brief you on Kansas Farmers Markets. My name is Mercedes Taylor-Puckett, Coordinator of the Farmers Market Project for the Kansas Rural Center.

**Background on Kansas Farmers Markets**

Kansas has experienced a dramatic increase in farmers markets over the past twenty-four years. In 1987, the first year markets were surveyed, Kansas was home to 26 farmers markets. Today that number has almost quadrupled to the current census of 101 markets statewide.

Similar statistics are demonstrated nationally. In 1994, there were approximately 1,755 farmers markets in the United States. By 2010 their numbers had more than tripled — to more than 6,130. In excess of 3 million consumers shop and more than 100,000 farmers sell at these markets annually. The United States Department of Agriculture estimates that these markets generate more than \$1.3 billion in consumer spending each year.

**Kansas Farmers Markets: Growing Healthy Farms, Families and Communities**

A farmers market is like a three-legged stool. One leg being the farmer, one the consumer and the other is the community and all three legs are in equal proportions and balanced.

**Growing Local Farms**

Farmers markets are business incubators, providing growers a built in customer base, low start-up costs, and the ability to sell smaller quantities. And unlike other outlets, markets allow vendors to obtain retail prices for their goods. The instant feedback received from consumers at markets permits farmers to respond to trends and seize opportunities to develop new products or change their product mix. The consumer interactions also enable vendors to promote their products and any additional farm ventures, such as agritourism operations (U-Pick, farm stands, etc...) One of the most valuable resources a market provides its vendors, especial those new to the business, is a network of farmers with experience in production and marketing.

**Growing Healthy Families**

Farmers markets are asset to families seeking affordable, healthy foods. Obesity rates for adults (28.2%) and children (16.2%) are trending upward. Obesity is single biggest health problem confronting the Kansas in terms of what it costs the state in shortened lives, unnecessary disease and preventable medical costs. Farmers markets provide Kansans with a diverse product mix of fresh fruits and vegetables, meats and value-added products.

Farmers markets participate in programs that target those most at risk of food insecurity. The 2010 Kansas Senior Farmers Market Program provided 5,700 low-income seniors with \$30 vouchers to purchase Kansas-grown fruit and vegetables. Thirteen farmers markets in Kansas are now equipped to accept SNAP benefits and in 2010 markets processed 995 Vision Card transactions totaling \$16,357. (Markets also had 617 debit transactions totaling \$17,464.) Incentive programs, such as the Beens&Greens in the Kansas City area, offer to double the value of SNAP and SFMNP expenditures at market and have shown to substantially boost redemption at participating markets.

And finally, many markets and farmers have partnered with food pantries to glean excess produce. One example is the Society of St. Andrew West, based in Kansas City. In 2009, the group's 600 volunteers collected more than 100,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables in Kansas and Missouri. This produced was distributed at emergency food centers and providing families with healthy and fresh food.

**Growing Healthy Communities**

One of the most significant impacts a market can have is to strengthen the social fabric of a community. Markets bring residents together, creating vibrant public spaces and nurturing a sense of community

among residents. A farmers market brings together people of diverse cultural backgrounds, a variety of ages and all levels of economic scale.

Markets often collaborate on events with community groups. The Ft. Scott Farmers Market hosted a Ride-Safe event with the town's police department; officers taught children bicycle safety skills and distributed free helmets. Other markets have teamed-up with fire departments, often bring along a fire truck and equipment, to provide community safety training. Many markets develop partnerships with local businesses and agencies, such as restaurant and county extension offices, to provide cooking demonstrations, samplings, and food safety information.

Kansas farmers markets draw crowds of shoppers each market day. Some markets perform hourly customer counts or do Rapid Market Assessments. While this is great for farmers, it is also a benefit for local businesses. The customer appeal of farmers markets spills into the surrounding area, bringing foot traffic and sales to shops and businesses around markets too. Many communities recognize this and are hosting their markets in downtowns, as a revitalization tool, and in shopping districts to encourage spillover traffic. In the past two years, the number of communities requesting assistance to start markets has doubled.

And dollars spent at farmers markets are more likely to remain in the community. Researchers have documented that of every \$100 spent at a grocery store, \$25 remains in the community. If that same \$100 is spent at a farmers market, \$62 is retained locally.

Farmers markets are also about bringing farms and consumers together. Developing direct relationships between shoppers and farmers is the best way to teach consumers about the challenges and rewards of agriculture.

Kansas farmers markets are an asset to our state. They provide direct marketers of locally raised fruits, vegetables, meats and dairy products with sales outlets. They provide our families a source of healthy, Kansas-raised foods. And they enrich our communities both socially and economically. I will be happy to stand for questions.

### **Nutrition Programs**

Kansas Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program: <http://www.kdheks.gov/sfmnp/>

Kansas Farmers Market EBT Program: <http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org/news/using-your-vision-card-at-the-farmers-market>

Beans&Greens Incentive Program: <http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org/news/the-kansas-city-beansgreens-program-makes-healthy-produce-more-accessible-and-affordable-for-sn?v=producers>

Market Gleaning: <http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org/news/sosa-west-seeks-to-partner-with-growers-in-2010-growing-season?v=producers>

### **Affordability of Farmers Market Products**

Iowa: <http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/pubs/staff/prices.html>

Seattle: <http://www.seattlefarmersmarkets.org/ripe-n-ready/are-the-farmers-markets-really-more-expensive>

## Southwest Kansas

Dodge City Farmers Market  
Garden City Farmers Market  
LaCrosse Farmers Market  
Lakin Farmers Market  
Leoti Farmers Market  
Liberal Community Farmers Market  
Meade Farmers Market

## South Central Kansas

Anthony Farmers Market  
Ark City Farm & Art Market  
Burns Farmers Market  
Central Park Farmers Market  
Cheney Farmers Market  
Delano Community Farmers Market  
Derby Farmers Market  
Doyle Valley Farmers Market  
El Dorado Farmers Market  
Florence Farmers Market  
Harper County Farmers Market  
Harvey County Farmers Market  
Haysville Hometown Market  
Hesston Farmers Market  
Hillsboro Farmers Market  
Kansas Grown Farmers Market  
Lyons Farmers Market  
McPherson Farmers Market  
Medicine River Market  
Old Town Farmers Market  
Red Barn Farm and Art Market  
Reno County Farmers Market  
St. John Farmers Market  
Valley Center Farmers Market  
Walnut Valley Farmers Market  
Wellington Farmers Market  
Yoder Farmers Market



[www.ksfarmersmarkets.org](http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org)

## North Central Kansas

Abilene Farmers Market  
Belleville Farmers Market  
Clay Center Farmers Market  
Clifton Farmers Market  
Clyde Farmers Market  
Concordia Farmers Market  
Frankfort Farmers Market  
Hanover Farmers Market  
Natoma Farmers Market  
Russell Area Farmers Market  
Salina Farmers Market  
Smith County Farmers Market  
Solomon Valley Farmers Market  
Washington Farmers Market

## Southeast Kansas

Allen County Farmers Market  
Burlington Farmers Market  
Chanute Farmers Market  
Coffeyville Farmers Market  
Erie Farmers Market  
Farmers Market Inc. in Historic Independence  
Fredonia Farmers Market  
Ft. Scott Farmers Market  
Garnett Farmers Market  
Girard Farmers Market  
Lebo Farmers Market  
Parsons Farmers Market  
Pittsburg Farmers Market  
Strong City Farmers Market

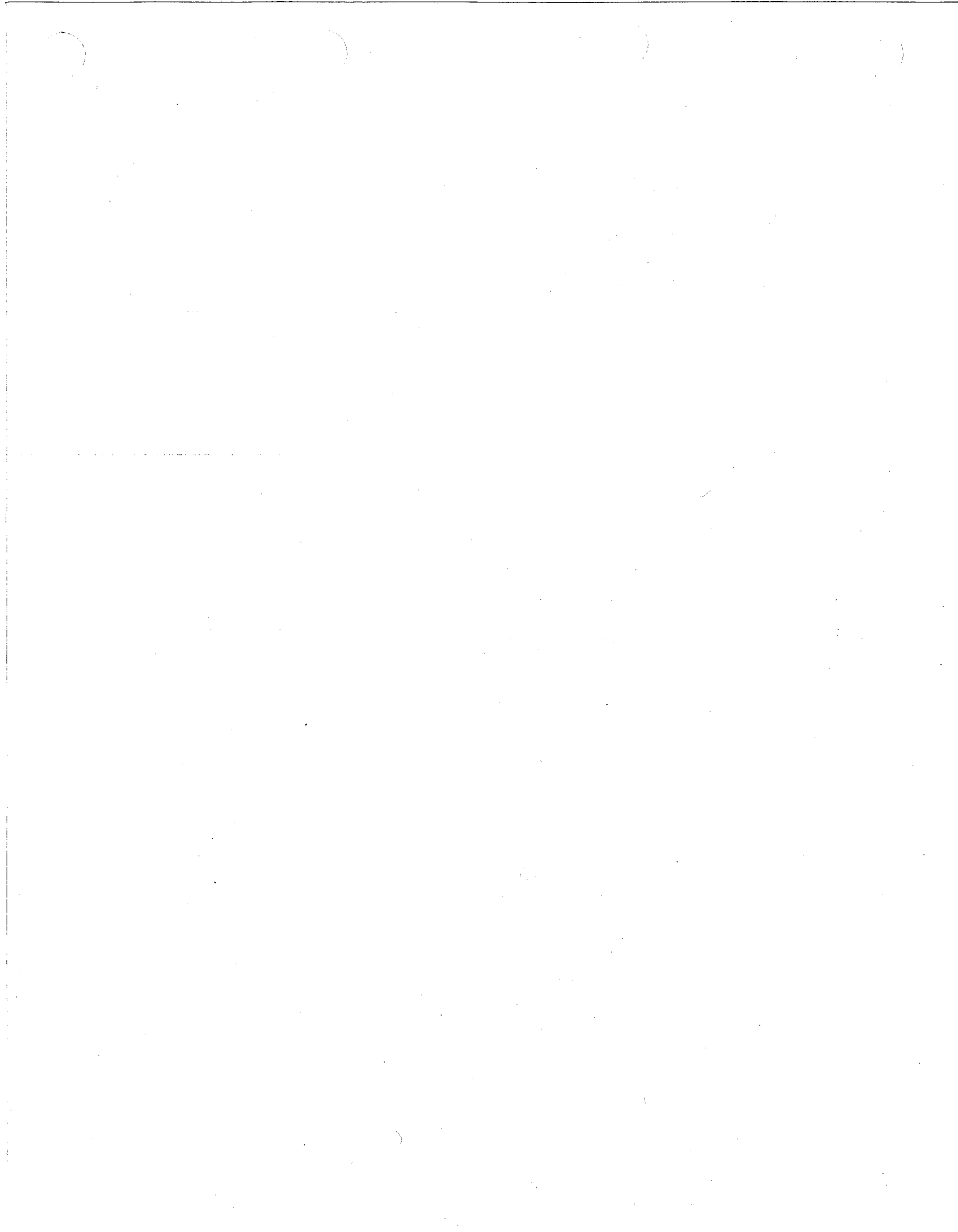
## Northwest Kansas

Goodland Farmers Market  
Hays Area Farmers Market  
Norton County Farmers Market  
Oberlin Farmers Market  
St. Francis Farmers Market

## Northeast Kansas

Atchison Farmers Market  
Auburn Farmers Market  
Blue Valley Recreation Farmers Market  
Burlingame Farmers Market  
Capitol Midweek Farmers Market  
Cottin's Hardware Farmers Market  
Downtown Manhattan Farmers Market  
Downtown Topeka Farmers Market  
Eftingham Farmers Market  
Emporia Farmers Market  
Fresh Promises Farmers Market  
Gardner Farmers Market  
Jackson County Farmers Market  
Johnson County Community College  
Junction City Farmers Market  
Juniper Gardens Farmers Market  
KCK Green Market  
Lawrence Farmers Market  
Leavenworth Farmers Market  
Marysville Farmers Market  
Merriam Farmers Market  
Monday Market @ your library  
Olathe Farmers Market  
One Nineteen Green Market  
Ottawa Farmers Market  
Overland Park Farmers Market  
Paola Farmers Market  
Perry Leecompton Farmers Market  
Rosedale Farmers Market  
Sabetha Farmers Market  
Seneca Community Farmers Market  
Shawnee Farmers Market  
Spring Hill Farmers Market  
St. Mary's Farmers Market

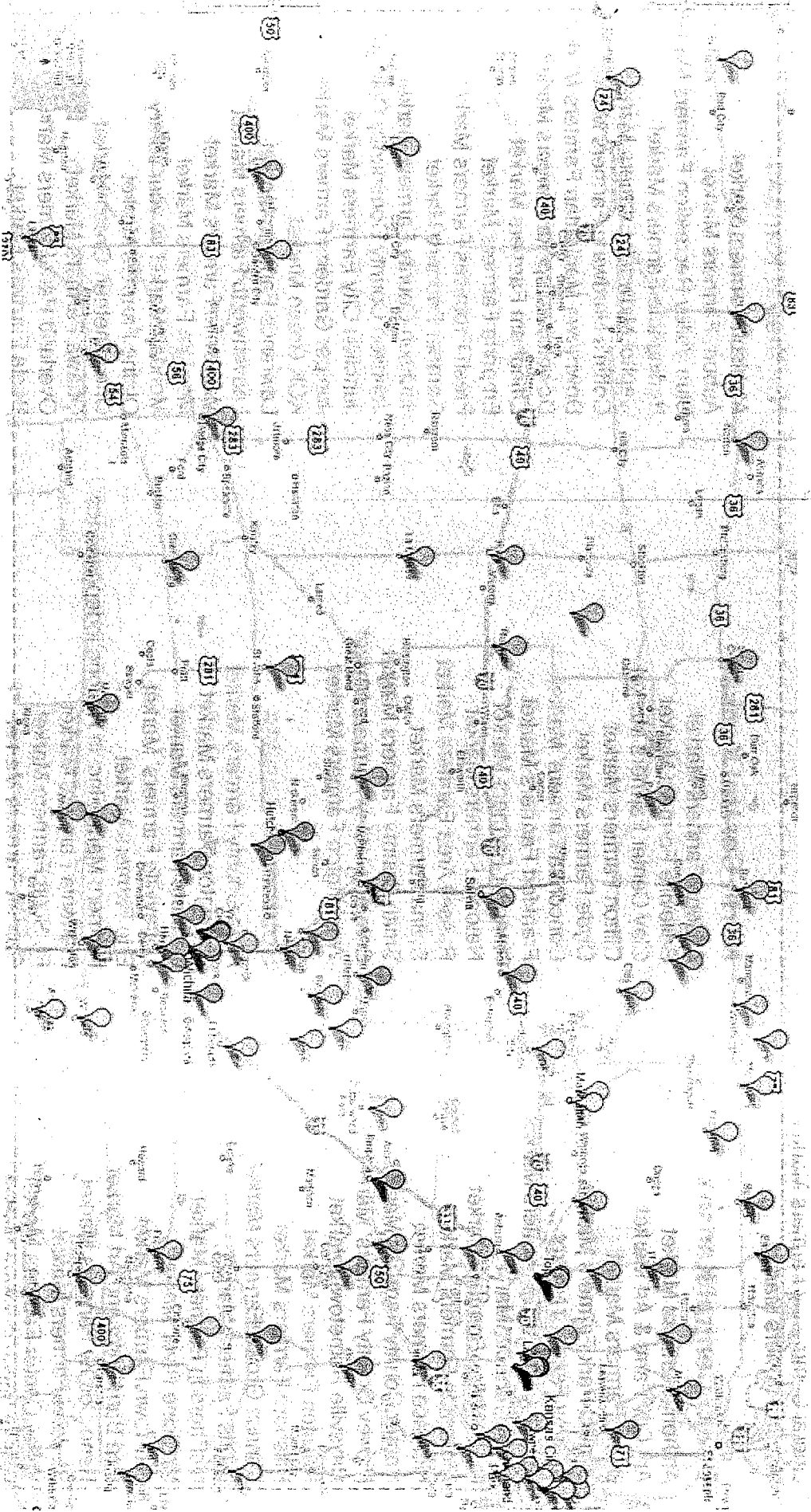
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# KS farmers markets

[www.ksfarmersmarkets.org](http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org)

Kansas has experienced a dramatic increase in farmers markets over the past twenty-four years. In 1987, the first year markets were surveyed, Kansas was home to 26 farmers markets. Today that number has almost quadrupled to the current census of 101 markets statewide. Visit [www.kansafarmersmarkets.org](http://www.kansafarmersmarkets.org) to learn more.



-  Green = Market
-  Magenta= Market accepts Vision Card (EBT)
-  Purple = Market accepts Vision Card (EBT) + Beans&Greens (SNAP Incentive Program)
-  Blue = Winter Market

### KRC's Farmers Market Project

For more than a decade, the Kansas Rural Center has supported the development of Kansas farmers markets through statewide conferences, producer workshops, manager/board training, publications, market grants and cost-free consultation services. Mercedes Taylor-Puckett currently coordinates KRC's Farmers Market Project. [mercedes.taylorpuckett@gmail.com](mailto:mercedes.taylorpuckett@gmail.com) 785.840.6202

