



July 2026 Local Food Town Hall



Today's Agenda:

- Presentations:
 - Assessing the Impact of Urban Agriculture on Community Health – Dr. Sheila Abacan
 - Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program – Brittney Grother, KDA
 - K-State's Produce Safety Demonstration Unit & Mobile Lab – Dr. Manreet Bhullar
- Program Updates from Across the State
 - Funding, grant programs, and staffing changes
 - Upcoming events
 - New resources or opportunities
- Evaluation

Notes & Recordings of all Town Halls can be found at: <https://www.k-state.edu/kansaslocalfoods>

Welcome Poll:

- Have you attended a quarterly Local Food Town Hall in the past?
 - Yes, more than one time
 - Yes, one other time
 - No, this is my first
 - I'm not sure

Welcome Poll:

- What part of the state are you from?
 - Northeast
 - North Central
 - Northwest
 - Southwest
 - South Central
 - Southeast
 - KC Metro, MO
 - Not from Kansas
- Please put your name, location, and organization or business affiliation (if any) in the chat.

Assessing the Impact of Urban Agriculture on Community Health

SHEILA F. ABACAN

PhD in Food, Nutrition, Dietetics, and Health, Kansas State University;

Assistant Professor, University of the Philippines Los Baños

Methods

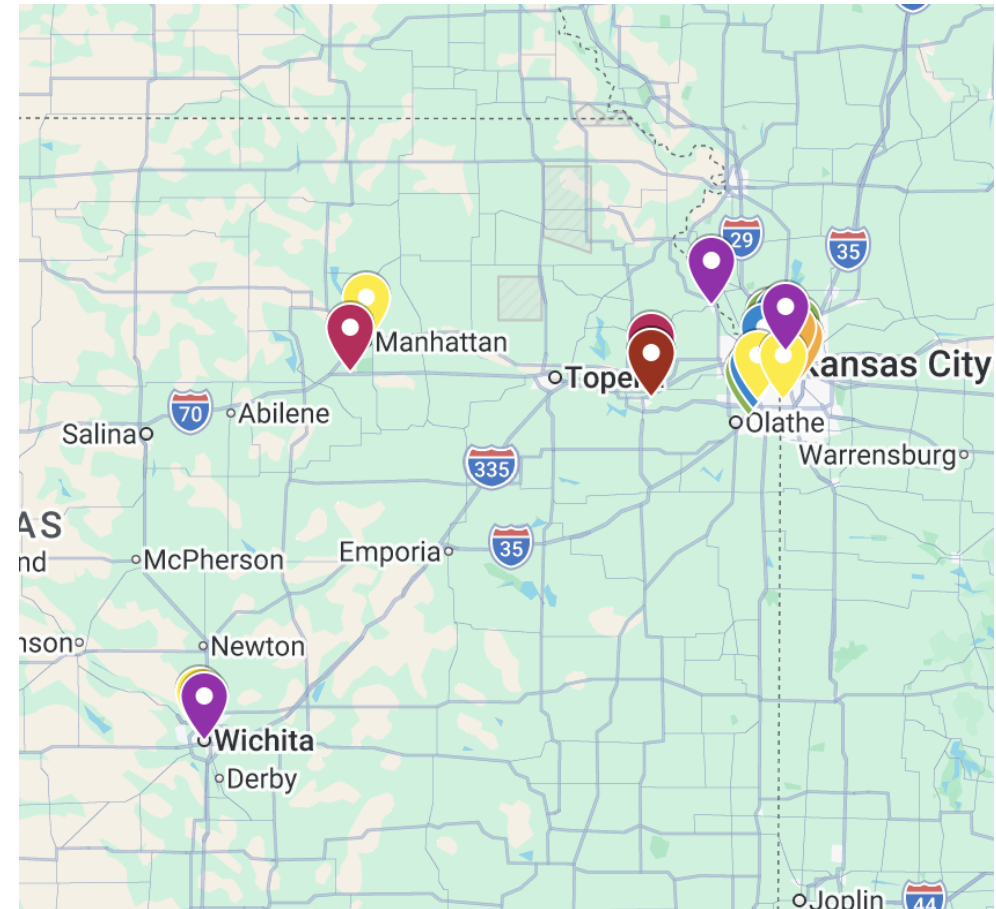
Online Survey using Qualtrics™

Total number of participants included in the analysis= 421

- Owner/Operator Survey (n=23)
- Audience Survey (n=398)

Urban Agriculture (UA) Site Categories

- High School Gardens (HSG)
- Training Farms (TF)
- Community Gardens (CG)
- Intensive Production (IP)
- Urban Production Farms (UPF)
- Peri-urban Production Farms (PUPF)



*Not pictured: Akron, OH

Higher proportions of urban agriculture participants met recommended health behaviors than reported in national estimates.

Behaviors	UA Participants ¹	U.S. Adults
Met fruit recommendation	46%	12% ²
Met vegetable recommendation	25%	10% ²
Met aerobic PA recommendation	69%	23% ³
Met aerobic + muscle-strengthening	51%	24% ³
Slept 7–9 hours	72%	37% ⁴

¹Proportions are calculated within each behavior group to account for unequal sample sizes

²2019 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

³2020 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS)

⁴2022 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

Physical Health : Lower Observed Prevalence of Chronic Disease

- ✓ **Overall Burden: 0 median NCDs** per participant; **18% Multimorbidity** (vs 51% U.S. adults national estimate)
- ✓ **Lower obesity: 18% Obesity** (vs 40% U.S. Adults)
- ✓ **Perceived Health:** Median rating of **75 /100** ("Very Good").

Psychosocial Wellbeing : High Community Connectedness



**Positive
Psychosocial
Well-being**

- ✓ **91.8%** of UA participants has positive social wellbeing (measuring social connectedness, respect, and low loneliness)
- ✓ **Median Social Wellbeing Score: 4.0/ 5.0** ("Good")
- ✓ **Mental Health Score: Median 77.5 / 100** (57% achieving "good mental health," matching national baselines)

Participant Health Outcomes Across UA Sites

UA Site Archetype	Standout Health Indicators (Medians)
Community Hubs Community Gardens	Mental Health: 81/100 <i>(Highest)</i> Perceived Health: 75/100 <i>(Highest)</i> NCDs: 0
Youth & School-Based Site High School Gardens	Physical Activity: 5,039 METs <i>(Highest)</i> Veg Intake: 1 cup/day <i>(Lowest)</i> Perceived Health: 65/100
High-Intensity Production Intensive Production Farms	Sedentary Time: 3 hrs/day <i>(Lowest)</i> BMI: 23.3 <i>(Lowest)</i> Mental Health: 65/100 <i>(Lowest)</i>
Commercial & Training Farms - Training Farms - Urban and Peri-Urban Farms	Veg Intake: 2 cups/day <i>(Highest)</i> NCD Burden (UPF): 1 NCD median Physical Activity: 3,222–3,444 METs

Evidence-Based Opportunities for Practice & Policy

Extension & Programmatic Actions



Youth & Family Culinary Outreach

- Partner school gardens with SNAP-Ed/EFNEP
- Bridge youth produce gap (1 → 2+ cups/day)



Senior & Accessible Gardening

- Mobilize Master Gardeners for raised beds



Grower Ergonomics & Heat Safety

- Workshops on ergonomics & shade management
- Protect high-intensity growers from burnout

Policy & Municipal Actions



Land Tenure & Water Rights

- Protect plots in city master plans
- Streamline permits & municipal water rates



Weather-Shielded Infrastructure

- Capital grants for shade, seating & paths



Food Access & Market Subsidies

- EBT/SNAP integration at farm stands
- Expand Double Up Food Bucks Heartland

The seal of the State of Kansas is partially visible on the left side of the slide. It features a circular design with the words "STATE OF KANSAS" around the perimeter. Inside the seal, there is a landscape with a sun rising over hills, a river, and a small building. The words "ER ASPERA" are also visible within the seal.

RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM

**Kansas Department of Agriculture
July 29, 2026**

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- **The Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RFSI) was funded by the American Rescue Plan Act to improve food and agricultural supply chain resiliency.**
- **The pandemic revealed that to be more resilient, the food system of the future needs to be more diversified, distributed, and local.**
- **The purpose of the program was to build resilience in the middle of the food supply chain and strengthen local and regional food systems by creating new revenue streams for producers.**
- **States made subawards in the form of grants for projects to expand capacity and infrastructure for the aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, or distribution of targeted local and regional agricultural products.**

KANSAS STATE PLAN

- **KDA was awarded \$6,459,356 through a cooperative agreement with the USDA to administer the program at the state level.**
- **Statewide outreach identified three primary gaps in the middle of our state's food supply chain: aggregation points, food processing infrastructure, and storage. These became the funding priorities for the grant program.**
- **KDA awarded both infrastructure grants and simplified equipment-only grants. Infrastructure grants could range in value from \$100,000 to \$3,000,000 and required a match contribution. Simplified equipment-only grants could range in value from \$10,000 to \$100,000.**
- **KDA awarded 8 infrastructure grants and 59 simplified equipment-only grants for a total investment of \$6,321,869.19.**

A map of the state of Kansas, showing its major cities, highways, and the locations of 47 state parks. The parks are marked with blue and yellow pins. The map includes labels for major cities such as Topeka, Kansas City, Overland Park, Wichita, and Lawrence. It also shows major highways like I-70, I-35, and I-49. The state parks are distributed across the state, with a higher concentration in the eastern half. The map is titled "Kansas State Parks" and includes a legend indicating that blue pins represent state parks and yellow pins represent state parks that are also national parks.

STATEWIDE STANDOUTS

- **Over 60% of the Kansas projects were focused on the storage, processing, and delivery of local fruits and vegetables.**
- **Kansas funded 9 projects focused on milling, processing, and distribution of local wheat, sorghum, Kernza, and heirloom grains.**
- **More than \$190,000 was invested into 6 projects to support local honey processing and bottling of honey-based products.**
- **At least 80% of Kansas' infrastructure projects installed specialized equipment for local produce such as processing components, and sorting, packing, and labeling equipment.**

QUESTIONS?

Brittney Grother
Grants Coordinator
785-564-6797
Brittney.Grother@ks.gov



K-State Produce Safety Demonstration Unit and Mobile Lab

Manreet Bhullar, Ph.D.

MONTCLAIR
STATE UNIVERSITY

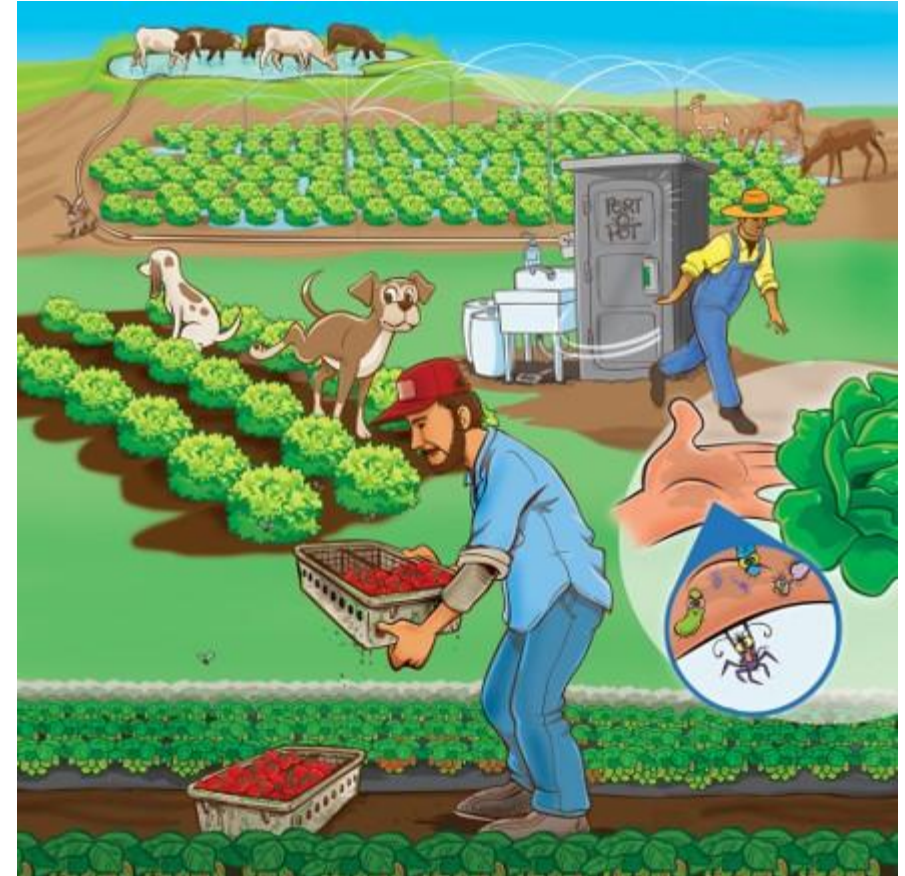
PSEG Institute for
Sustainability Studies

KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY

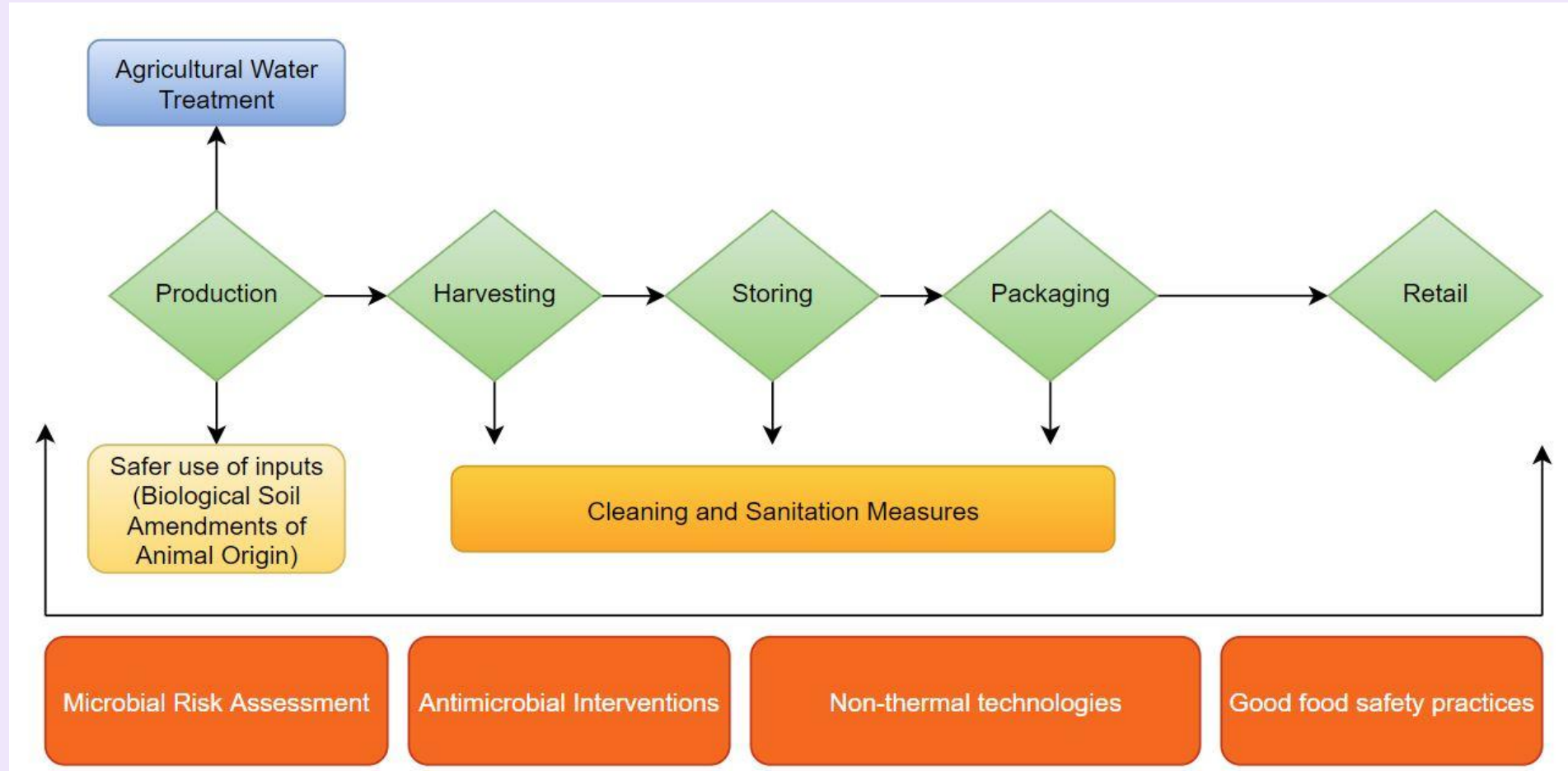


FSMA: Produce Safety Rule

- ❖ Science-based minimum standards for growing harvesting packing and holding fresh produce
- ❖ Overall goal is to minimize contamination
- ❖ 2016-2026; Extension and Outreach efforts continued



Overview of Research Program





Article

Evaluation of Peroxyacetic Acid and Chlorine as Surface Water for Post-Harvest Uses in the Prodi

Local farmers learn water treatment options

SEPTEMBER 4, 2024 / NEWS



**Comparative Assessment of the
Quality of Agricultural Water on
Missouri Fresh Produce I**



**id and Chlorine Reduce
gricultural Surface Water
duce Postharvest Uses**



Manreet Bhullar, assistant professor of produce safety with the Department of Horticulture and Natural Resources at Kansas State University, talks about different water disinfection treatment techniques during a presentation at a pond at Casa Somerset. Brian McCauley / Miami County Republic



**Knowledge, Attitudes, and Perceptions of
UV-C Light Technologies for Agricultural Surface
Water Decontamination by Produce Growers
in Kansas and Missouri**

Vikas Kumar Galipothu¹, Tori Kent¹, Jason Griffin³, Eleni D. Pliakoni¹, Cary Rivard³,
Manreet Bhullar^{1,2}  

[Show more >](#)



Journal of Food Protection
Volume 89, Issue 3, March 2026

Research Paper

**Use of a Novel UV-C Tunnel
Misting to Reduce *Escherichia*
(*Daucus carota*)**

Sagar Pokhrel¹, Vikas Kumar Galipothu¹, Tricia Jenkins², Londa Nwadike³,
Manreet Bhullar¹  

and Growth of *Escherichia*

y Rivard⁵, Eleni Pliakoni¹,

of Food Protection
9, Issue 6, June 2026, 100781



**Light (222 nm) on Spoilage
Microbes and Shelf Life of Sweetpotatoes**

Cost is a key barrier to technology (UV) adoption

TABLE 5. The perceived barriers and needs of growers to facilitate the adoption of UV-C technology for agricultural water source treatment (*n* = 81)

Survey construct		Responses % (<i>n</i>)
Barriers	Technical skills	30.9 (25)
	Cost	33.3 (27)
	Complicated	16.0 (13)
	Maintenance	11.1 (9)
	Not appropriate for my operation	34.6 (28)
	Other	29.6 (24)
Needs	Money	61.7 (50)
	Technical training	55.6 (45)
	Time	28.4 (23)
	More information about its benefits	63.0 (51)
	Other	9.9 (8)

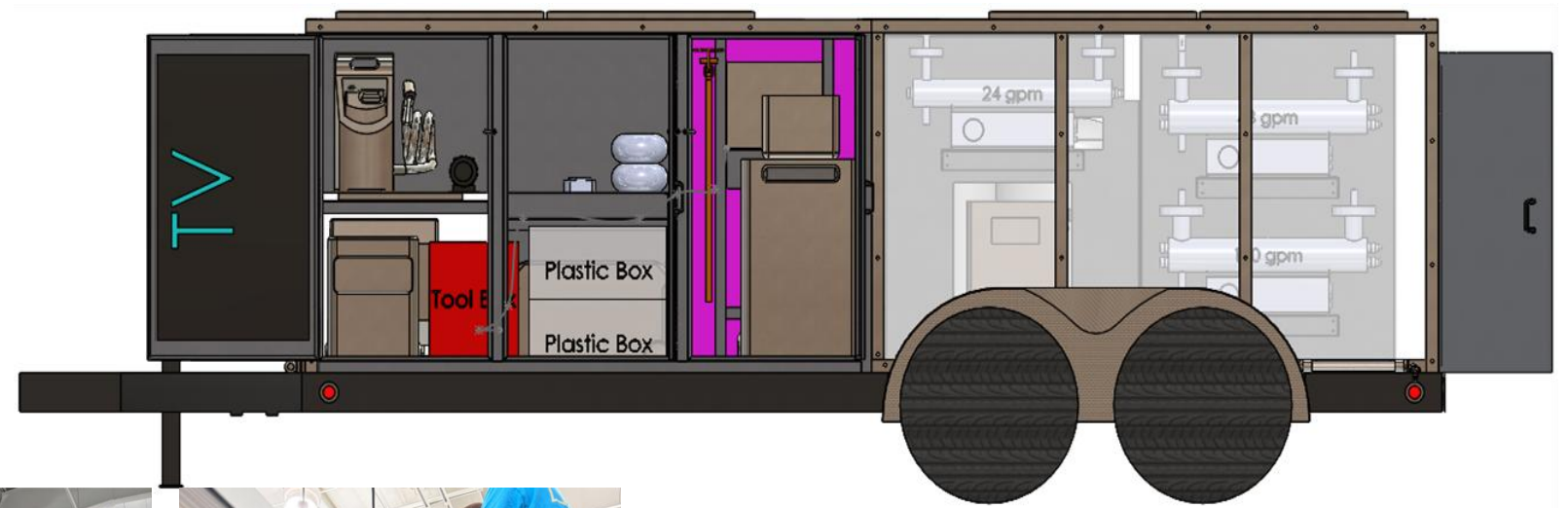
SCRI Planning grant – to evaluate the fresh produce industry perspectives on UV light technologies

The Mobile Lab: A Solution

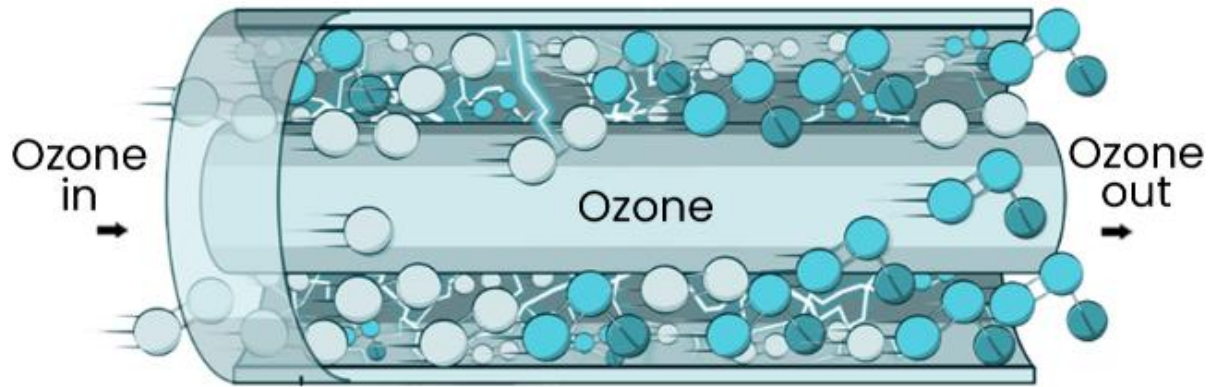
A mobile demonstration trailer to provide hands-on training and demonstrate:



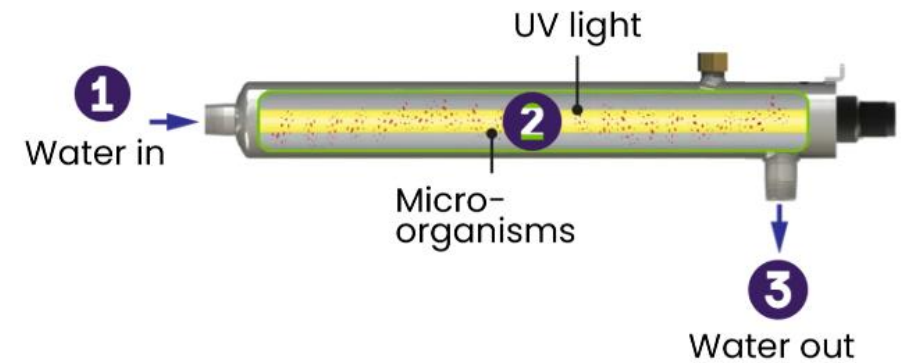
- ❖ Ag water treatment
- ❖ Produce Safety practices
- ❖ Produce Handling



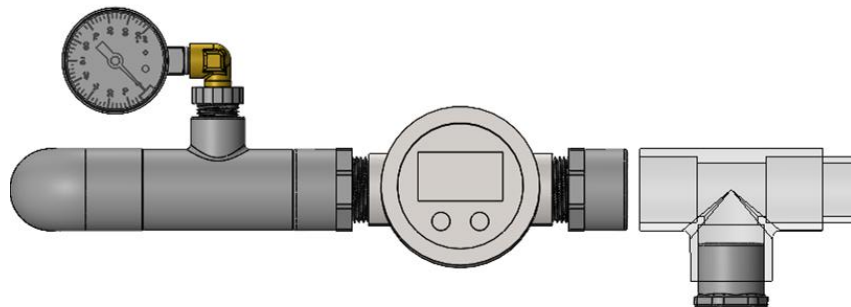
Water Treatment



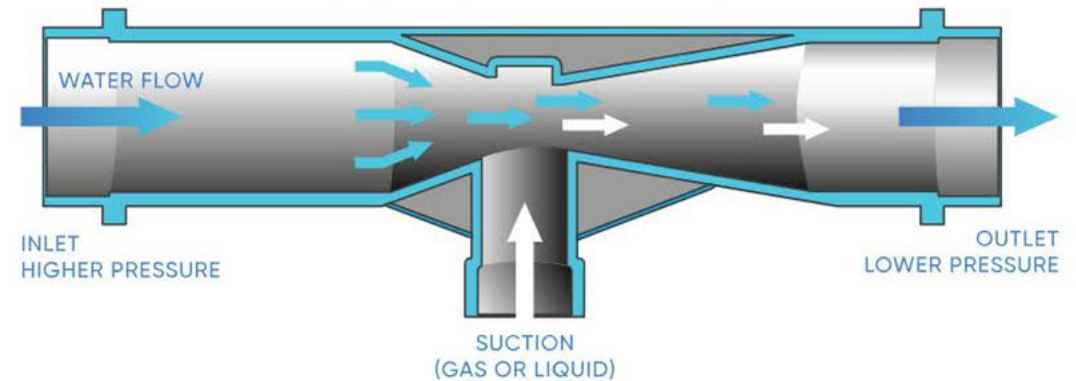
Ozonator



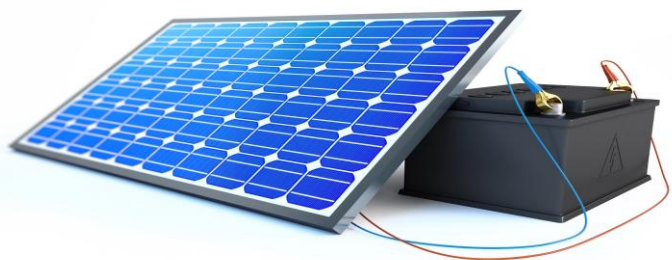
UV-C Water Treatment Device



Mechanical Injector



Venturi Injection



Instructional Manuals



ATP Testing Device



**Detects
Bacteria**



**Time
Efficient**



**Helps Prevent
Outbreaks**

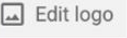


**Easy to
Use**

Website under development

 Produce Safety Unit

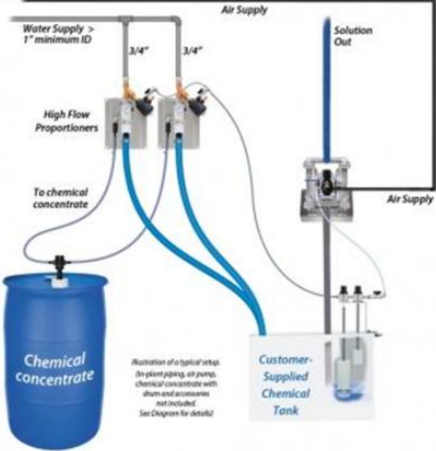
Home About Us Why does it matter? Technology ▾ Lending Program



On-Trailer Technology



UV Sanitization



Injection Venturi System

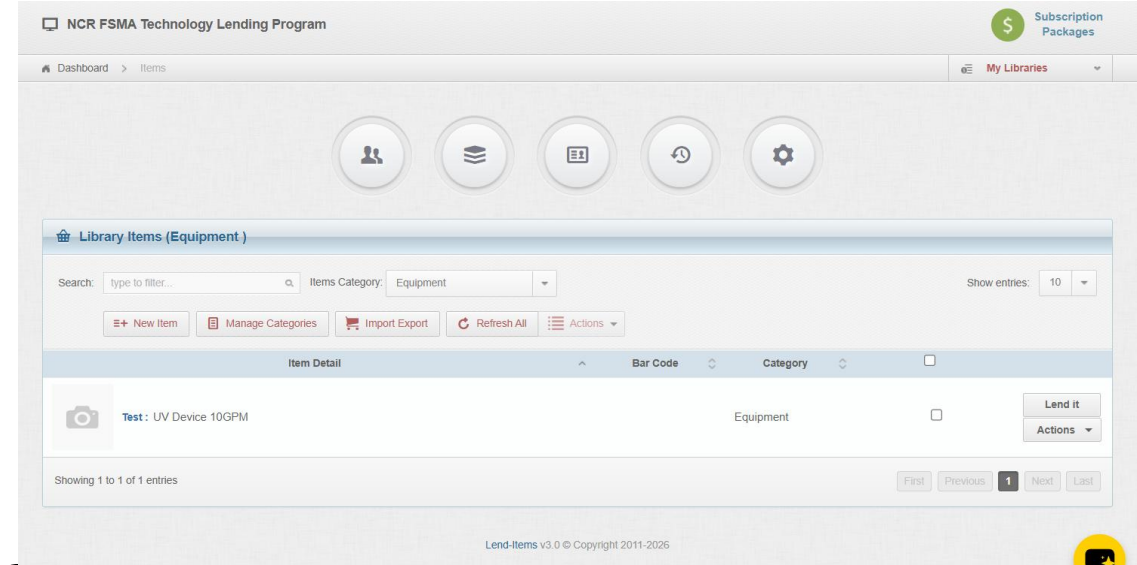


Ozone Generator



Technology Lending Program

- Who is eligible: Farms in NCR region
- How long can the technology be kept: 90 days
- Farms fill out Qualtrics survey with their information
- Maintain database through Lend-Items software; add users after Qualtrics survey
- People can pick up equipment if local or it is shipped
- Reminder at 80 days they are due to return soon; Send shipping label
- Followed by Evaluation



This work is supported by the Food Safety Outreach Program [grant no. 2024-70020-42954] from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Acknowledgement



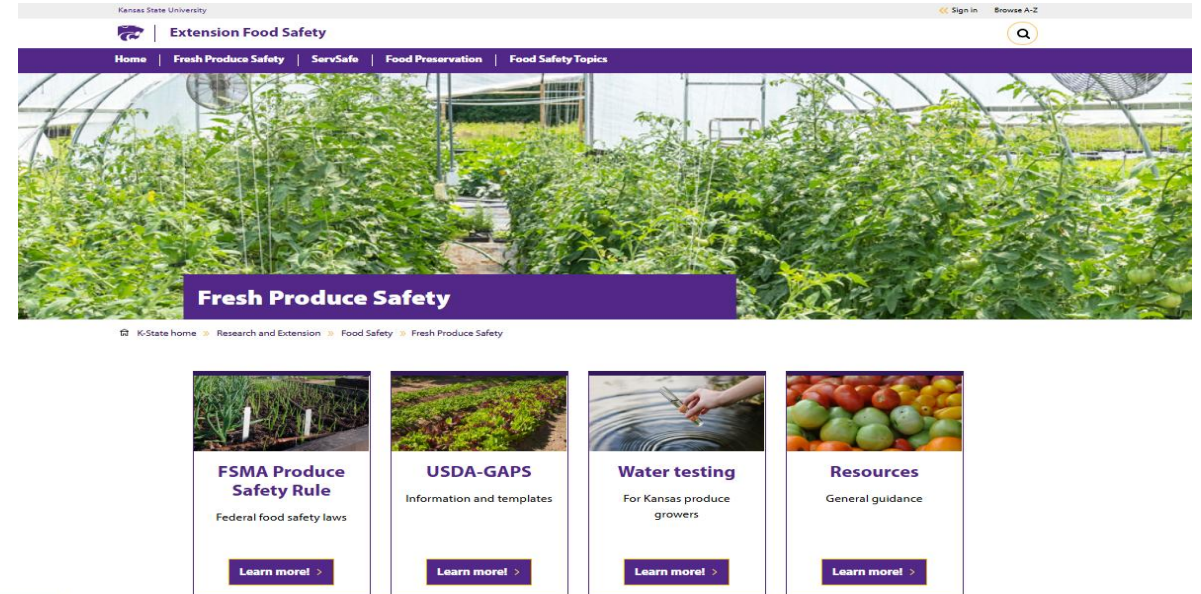
Manreet Bhullar
Associate Professor &
Extension Specialist



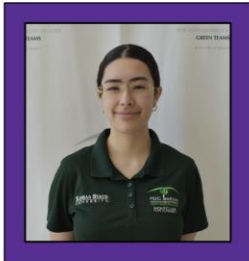
Katelynn Stull
Research Associate



Cal Jamerson
Extension Associate



Riley Kovalcik
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Environmental Design,
Policy and Planning



Bethany Lopez
New Jersey Institute
of Technology
Mechanical Engineering



Ethan Poon
Rutgers University,
New Brunswick
Computer Engineering

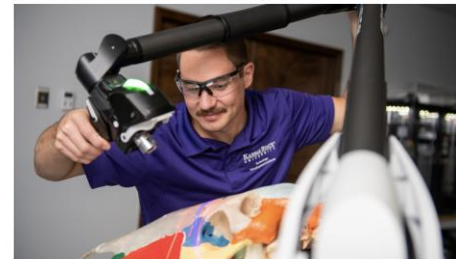


Fallon Regan
Lafayette College
Environmental Studies



Malina Wong
California State
University, Monterey
Bay
Environmental Science

Technology Development Institute (TDI) at Kansas State



Quinton Berggren
Senior Engineer



Evan Craig
Engineering Intern

Questions?

K-State Local Food Program Updates

Welcome Brooke Kauchak!

Born in Albuquerque, NM - grew up in Granville, OH.

- Has 3 cats, 1 dog, and 1 fiancé!
- In 2021, moved to Kansas for Americorps
 - City of Wichita, Office of Community Services
- June 2026 – Community Food Systems team!
 - Priorities: leading program promotion, monthly newsletters, program support, evaluation & impact reporting, website maintenance



Food Business Workshops

- Foodpreneur Lunch & Learn

- Food kitchens, food safety, food business resources

9/10

- Hays Food Business Workshop

- 10 am to 3pm at Cottonwood Extension Office, Hays
- Lunch catered by local food business
- Accessing space & funding, food safety and more!

10/6

- Space is limited, register today & help us spread the word!



Foodpreneur Lunch & Learn:

Licensing, Resources, and Growing your Food Business!

Join us for a FREE foodpreneur lunch and learn in partnership between the Dodge City/Ford County Development Corporation, Dodge City Area Chamber of Commerce, and K-State Extension's Community Food Systems team!



KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Extension

Learn about:

- Licensing requirements
- Food business regulations
- Accessing shared commercial kitchens
- Free resources to help your food business

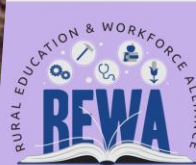
K-State Extension's Community Food Systems team:

- Helps build resilience, health and economic vitality for Kansas communities
- Connect with food and farm-based businesses across Kansas
- Offer one-on-one technical assistance

Who should attend?

- Food business owners
- Restaurant owners
- Food truck operators
- Home kitchen producers
- Value-added food producers
- Anyone interested in starting a food business

Free training, but space is limited
Please register early in advance
'lunch will be provided'



<https://www.raisingthewest.org/training-events/foodpreneur>

Peer Groups

Farmers Market Management

- Third Tuesday of the month
- 9 a.m.

• **Next Meeting:** Tuesday,
September 15th

Shared Kitchen Operators

- Fourth Tuesday of the Month
- 1:30 p.m.

• **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, August
25th

<https://tinyurl.com/CFSpeer>



GET INVOLVED JOIN US

[Learn More](#)[Sign Up for Our Mailing List](#)

JOIN US

Local food systems are successful when they have many diverse partners working together for a common goal. We invite you to join in our virtual or in-person events to help us continue building a thriving Kansas Local Food System.

Quarterly Virtual Town Halls

Community Roundtables

Local Food Fellows

Local Food Summit

Program Updates from Around the State

Next Town Hall – October 28, 2026

Last Wednesday of the month at 11 am:

- October 28th
- Register: <https://bit.ly/3JBnHyt>



Notes & Recordings of all Town Halls can be found at: <https://www.k-state.edu/kansaslocalfoods>

Closing Poll:

- How much do you agree or disagree that the Town Halls have helped you stay connected to statewide local food efforts?
 - Strongly Agree – Agree – Neither – Disagree – Strongly Disagree
- Did you learn something new today?
 - Yes
 - No
- Which topics were valuable to you today?
 - Impact of Urban Ag on Community Health
 - Resilient Food System Infrastructure Grant
 - Produce Safety Demonstration Unit & Mobile Lab
 - K-State Updates
 - Program Updates

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Closing Poll:

- How many people will you share something with from today's town hall?
 - None
 - 1
 - 2-5
 - 6 or more
- Do you have suggestions for speakers or topics at our next Town Hall?

Thank you!